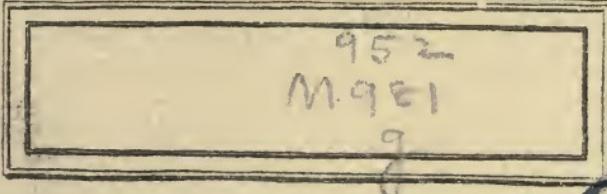
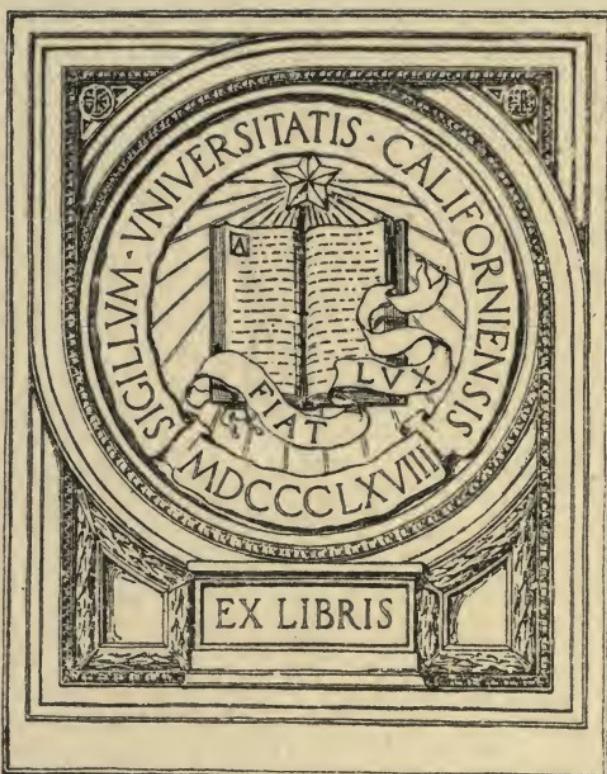


# GUESSES AT TRUTHS

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DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY  
*(Merlin" of the "Referee")*





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TO MARY  
AMANDA



David Christie Murray  
July 9<sup>th</sup> 1901

# Guesses at Truths

ETHICAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL  
. . . AND LITERARY . . .

BY

DAVID CHRISTIE MURRAY

("MERLIN" in *The Referee*)



LONDON

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to the author's desire, to print  
the first part

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

THIS volume consists of a reprint of some sixty articles contributed week by week during the last seven or eight years of his life by the late David Christie Murray to *The Referee* under the pseudonym of "Merlin."

They abundantly testify to his remarkable versatility and his complete freedom from prejudice and conventionality. Whether he wrote on the profoundest problems of life, or on literary or political subjects, he showed the same frankness and fearlessness, and his style was alike fresh, brilliant and original. The standpoint from which he wrote and his view of his true relations to those for whom he wrote are clearly set forth in the article headed "Writer and Reader" at page 241.

As a matter of convenience the articles have been placed under the headings of Ethical, Social, Political, Literary and Miscellaneous.

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# **ETHICAL**



## GUESSES AT TRUTHS.

### BEFORE THIS LIFE AND AFTER.

A history of religious beliefs would be a history of the progress of the human mind. In its earliest form religion exists as a blind awe of the forces of Nature and as a propitiation of some threatening and powerful unseen influence. Its first aim is self-protection, and its way to self-protection is sought in sacrifice. From Devil-worship, with its panic-stricken immolation of human victims, to Nature-worship, with its recognition of a something benevolent and beautiful to be adored, as well as something horrible to be flattered and appeased, is a great stride. The instinct is no longer one of terror only. Gratitude and affection have their word to say. Sacrifice continues, but its form is modified, and to follow the main trend of belief is to approach more and more nearly to an ideal of trust in the good intention of the unknown Powers. A certain element of cruelty, of savagery, of unreason, survives unto this day, but for many thousands of years the mind of man has striven to emancipate itself from its original cowardice, and with the birth of Monotheism it became essential to associate the idea of the Creator and Ruler with attributes of mercy and justice. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" The

whole study of religion in its broader developments —its one supreme aspiration since it left the cradle of horror in which it lay in the nursery of Thought —has been “to justify the ways of God to man”— to find some explanation of a condition of affairs which, on the surface, is full of haphazard and cruelty —an explanation which will acquit the Ruler of incompetence, indifference, and wilful oppression.

Not to speak it irreverently, but quite simply to choose the directest expression of a truth, the later and greater religions of the world have occupied themselves mainly in the effort to return a verdict of “Not Guilty” against God. There is no need to repeat the old diatribes at length ; but this is a world in which the wicked prosper, and in which the magnanimous, the gentle, and the good are at a disadvantage. It is a world full of hateful suffering, of hideously unjust inequalities—a world of sorrows and hungers and oppressions—a world, for nine-tenths of its human habitants, where men sit in leaden-eyed despair and hear each other groan. It is fatally easy to be loquacious on this theme, and we may take the bitter tale as read. The complexion the world must needs wear, to any thoughtful man who cannot hold on to some form of religious belief with which he can console himself, is one of blank hopelessness. Life is unendurably harsh—men are rapacious, and fate is capricious and pitiless. The very bodies we bear about with us are so many cunningly constructed engines for the infliction of torture. Each organ has an agony peculiar to itself, and each agony differs from all other agonies in an infinitude of variety—cancer and stone and gout and angina pectoris and lupus and wasting fever and the raging tooth. The mind is as well adapted for

variousness in misery as the body. All is out of joint as we see it by the unaided light of nature, when once the glad exuberance of youth is gone, and the spring and summer of our lives are betrayed to the fog and frost and darkness of the dying year.

The only refuge man can build for himself against the incursions of despair in the midst of a lot so mournful is that which he raises by the hands of Faith—Faith: the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Until some kind of divine Hope can body itself within him he is doomed to suffer in proportion with the vigour of his intellect and the richness of his sympathy. The most immediate and the most urgent difficulty the real searcher after an understanding of the universe encounters he meets in this form: In all creeds which have been accepted, since man emerged from mere savagery, it has been assumed that Good is the more powerful of the elements, whilst the practical experience of the world finds Evil prevalent. The Christian faith in especial teaches the omnipotence of God, and couples with unbounded power the ideal of an unceasing love. How to reconcile a loving Power of boundless authority with the existence of the world as we know it? If there is one great Being who is responsible for all it is hard to believe that He voluntarily acquiesces in the existence of Evil, though it is obvious that if He be omnipotent, He ordained it, and it is either one of the instruments of an intelligent ruler, or the outcome of a cruel carelessness which works without a conscience or an aim.

There are Churches which promise to set the feet of the searcher on the rock of truth, but the things they have in common are not regarded by any of them as the real essentials of their creed. Yet the

student whose faith does not fix itself to form, sees that they unite in the truly important particulars. There is no one of the faiths held by civilised mankind at this moment which does not embody the belief in divine justice, and this in the face of all surface evidence to the contrary. There is not one of them which does not embody the belief in the continuance of the individual after death. There is not one which does not contemplate the great Source of all things as being friendly to His creatures and as being continuously aware of their necessities and desires. There is not one of them which does not exalt virtue and condemn its opposite. They agree in respect to this world's intelligent and just supervision—in respect to a revision of its inequalities hereafter—and, detail apart, they agree in their conception of the human virtues.

The confession of them all is—"There's something in the world amiss ; shall be unriddled by and by," and in the meantime they all aim at such an adjustment of admitted fact with faith as will leave the necessary central idea of the goodness of God undisturbed. These, then, are the general religious conclusions of mankind : that the world is consciously controlled, that the Controller may be relied upon for justice, and that the perpetuity of the soul affords an opportunity for an adjustment of the inequalities of the present life. The task is to reconcile an omnipotent Justice with an unequal distribution of opportunity, and an omnipotent Love with the existence of suffering, and it is as a contribution towards the solution of this problem that the doctrine of Reincarnation becomes fascinating to the speculative thinker. One of its implications lies in the presumption of a relationship amongst

all forms of life, from the lowest to the highest. Science recognises the collective progress of sentient existence from mollusc to man. Reincarnation presupposes an individual progress in the same order, and is by no means opposed to the idea that this progress may have been as extensive. Life, according to this teaching, is an emanation of Divinity, which, having perfected its own manifestations, is, at the end, reabsorbed into the Divinity. The point with which we have at first to concern ourselves is the epoch at which a personal consciousness has a beginning. Tennyson says of Nature that "of fifty seeds she often brings but one to bear," but we know that it is true of those which fail to fructify that not one is lost, but all become a part of the habitat of the survivor. The life principle at the beginning may probably be accepted as being diffused throughout a species, and as continuing to be so diffused through many ages and grades of being until the mystery of Personality is first achieved in man.

The physical man is built up of a wholly incalculable number of physical units, and it is conceivable that in like manner the intelligence of man—the vital and inspiring essence—may be built up of an equally incalculable number of the units of intelligence which have aforetime served to animate other forms. Of course I do not suggest this as more than an imaginable postulate, but its acceptance would appear to pave the way to a more intelligent conception of the growth of the human anima than has yet been offered. In the first chapter of Genesis we read that God made man of the dust of the earth. We find as a matter of scientific fact that this statement is but a condensation of the truth. The process consisted not of one isolated act, but of myriads of

individual and progressive acts. We read further that God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and that man became a living soul. I venture to suggest the two processes as being coincident throughout the ages. We accept the first half of the theory of man's being, and there is no logical reason why we should not accept the latter half—if not with equal confidence, yet still as a possible truth in which we may find a germ of understanding.

The reader who has followed me thus far will be prepared to see how necessary it has been for each individual unit of intelligence to be stimulated by the pressure of need towards the preservation of its mortal envelope. Pain in the lowest organisms can be known only as a vague uneasiness which prompts the action which is needed to remove it. But as the units of intelligence increase in number and in consequent activity the stimulating quality of pain and danger increases, and with every advance their final advantages become more apparent. All progress is achieved by the satisfaction of desire. In man the warning of suffering is driven home by reason, and where man ceases to need that warning he ceases to suffer. At the beginning of things the desire for the avoidance of pain was the only educational influence, and without that impulse there could have been no progress.

If we regard the individual man as a passing phenomenon on this earthly stage—if we contemplate him as beginning here and ending here—we bid farewell at once to the idea of a just and intelligent governance of his destinies. Even if we assume a readjustment of his conditions in a future life, we are still at a loss to understand the reasons for which an intelligent and benevolent Ruler has seen fit to bury him in

such an environment as that in which he is condemned to exist. We may dismiss the charge of presumption. We are here to learn, and no thought is presumptuous which directs itself with honesty towards the comprehension of our own estate, of its meaning, and of our relation to that universal Source of which we conceive ourselves the offspring. To ask of the purposes of God that they shall in all respects—and even in minute detail—conform themselves to our finite intelligence is a folly beyond speech. But the vast outline of His purpose seems visible if we conceive of the spirit of man as the coeval of eternity and as the product of an eternal experiment which is meant for his perfection, and which in the end cannot fail to lead him to the goal.

Embarking upon an excursion of this sort, it is futile to search for a positive "There is." We have done well if we arrive at a reasonable "There may be." The best of books is but a word in art. The acutest philosophical suggestion may be likened to the cell of the coral insect in its relation to the building of a continent. But it seems probable that the laws which govern physical life have their parallel in the laws of spiritual life, and that precisely as there are attractions and repulsions in chemistry there are attractions and repulsions between soul and soul, and that the successive experiences of the spirit are controlled by these, so far as the selection of a fitting habitation in each incarnation is concerned. In the philosophy of Swedenborg there is an entire correspondence between the material and the spiritual worlds. Thought begets itself upon thought, and impulse fructifies with impulse, and thought and impulse alike may stand in need of the vital influence of death before they blossom in a new revelation of

the human personality, precisely as the seed of a flower must undergo disintegration before it can issue in a replica of the parent bloom.

The dying grain and growing ear are the symbols used by the Apostle, and they are incomplete only as affording no suggestion of that continuance of personal life on which his argument as a whole insists. But all reason and all analogy point to the continuance of the individual man—not as part of a general essence or spirit of life, but as an entity in which the moral components, the experiences, the results of earlier stages of existence are all bound up. As I have previously said, the evidential value of the intuitions to which such frequent appeal is made is not of itself great. Yet it may at least be accepted as a partial corroboration of the reasonable probability of a most salutary creed, which leads us to believe that we are—and always must be—precisely what we have made ourselves; that on our conduct here depends our condition hereafter; and that we carry with us into new spheres of duty precisely such an equipment of wisdom, knowledge, and self-control as we have accumulated in the past.

## AN ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY.

WHILST the schools of Nancy and the Salpêtrière are in dispute as to the very groundwork of the physical conditions which regulate the researches they are separately making into psychic phenomena, the inquiry is being helped along by all sorts of individual workers, whose efforts are the more valuable because they are not obscured or vitiated by any sense of

partisanry on either side. American science is very richly active in this direction, as it is in most others, and the latest serious contribution to a fascinating study comes to us from that side in the new edition of Mr. Thomson Jay Hudson's book entitled "The Law of Psychic Phenomena." This work is notable as offering definitely the theory that our researches into the nature of hypnotism, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and other such matters, have resulted in a positively logical presumption as to the vitality of the soul after death—this logical presumption being for the first time based on the result of a scientific observation which has been directed towards the working of the human will under almost countless circumstances of normality and abnormality. For my own part, I am not sanguine enough to hope that in my day we shall prove the existence of an immortal part in man in such a fashion as to satisfy all doubters, for demonstration is obviously out of the question, and there are minds which will only yield intellectual allegiance to what they imagine to be demonstrated. But it will be something if we can reasonably accept the belief that Science, which was so long regarded as the hand-maiden of Materialism and the enemy of man's spiritual hopes, is really beginning to kindle a lamp which may supplement the light of faith. Let us see if there lies anything of true promise in this suggestion.

The fact of the Dual Mind lies at the foundation of the idea. I say "the *fact* of the Dual Mind" because that is become one of the questions about which people have ceased to argue. We dispute as to the manifestations of the Dual Mind, and as to their significance, but no person whose opinion is worth more than an empty nutshell any longer doubts the existence

of that most amazing and delicate apparatus. Our latest writer chooses the old phrase of metaphysics in which to describe it, and divides it into subjective and objective. The words are not ideally perfect for their purpose, but they will serve, provided we are once clear as to what we intend to understand by them. The objective mind is the mind with which we are familiar, with which we think our common thoughts, register our common observations, and regulate our common conduct. Through the objective mind we exercise volition, and here is the most immediate contrast between it and its intellectual complement. The subjective mind has no will of its own. It is wholly incapable of initiative, and must be stirred into action by the initiative of its colleague. Yet we rely upon it for functions of an even more surprising nature than those habitually performed by the working intellect of every day. For instance, it is conjectured, and with every aspect of reasonableness, that it remembers everything which has come within the range of its experience.

Tennyson, in one of his earlier sonnets, dwells on the sensation which is so common in experience—commoner, I think, in earlier than in later life—under which we seem to be aware that whatever is going on about us is a repetition of something which has been transacted aforetime, whether in this life or another the amazed subject of the sensation cannot tell. Here is the subjective half of the mind at work. Something has happened which awakens no memory in the objective mind, but is instantaneously recognised by its unforgetting twin. The association between the two minds is not absolutely complete, and a sort of confused and mystic wonder asserts itself in the place of a definite recollection. Students do not need

to be told that this theory of the all-embracing and all-retaining memory of the subjective mind is based upon many recorded examples of its working, and, indeed, the vast majority of men can supply their own illustrations in a certain measure. Memory is largely a matter of association. Oliver Wendell Holmes says that the smell of blacking had a curious efficacy in recalling to his mind certain emotions of his boyhood, and it is a curious fact that the sense of smell is more powerful than any other of the senses in its provocation of the return of past thoughts and scenes. That is by the way. The fact remains that there are influences potent to awake the dead in the memory of each and every one of us. There are myriads on myriads of things which we have, to all seeming, forgotten. Searching our times from the beginning, we can catch no glimpse of countless faces we have seen, of thousands of circumstances in which we have been engaged. Suddenly, in obedience to what impulse we cannot tell, the dead past springs alive again. We see some fragment of it as if by lightning. It was forgotten, we say, until that instant. And now we are learning that nothing is forgotten.

The case of the memory of the subliminal "subjective" mind which is best known to English readers is probably that which is cited by Coleridge. Here, a girl of the most commonplace intelligence—if not considerably below the commonplace—and without education, was found, whilst in a state of intellectual disorder, reciting passages from the classics, and holding forth in stately terms in Hebrew. It was proved after a great deal of trouble in tracing this young person's career that she had at one time been in the service of a scholar whose habit it had been to declaim aloud favourite passages in Greek, Latin, and

Hebrew. The girl had heard the declamation, of course without attaching the remotest meaning to it, and although in her normal state of mind she could not recall a syllable, the subjective half of the intellect had laid hold upon it all, and had retained it, even to a faithful reproduction of the pompous tones of the original reciter. A cognate instance is that of a lady who, having resided a whole year in France without at any time attempting to speak French, chattered in that language with incoherent fluency whilst under the influence of chloroform.

These two instances agree with a thousand others in one particular. A memory of which the actual owner is unconscious is only exercised and discovered when the ordinary functions of the intellect are in a state of suspension—when, as it may be said, the everyday working brain is off duty. It is thus an accompaniment of dementia, and is one of its signs, whilst in itself it is nothing less than a restoration of a faculty most eminently sane; that, namely, of the perfect recognition of the surroundings of a bygone time. It is an emancipation of one half of the mind, but it is significant of a great deal that the emancipation cannot be effected without the temporary enslavement of the other half. I find in the pages of a writer whose opinion I can usually respect the suggestion that this operation of the intellect is like the change of focus in a field-glass. “The glass is as true to the laws of optics as ever it was, but it is now arranged for another distance. Before you turned the regulator it revealed objects at a score of yards. Now it will show you nothing that is not at least a mile away.” But there are signs enough to show us that the change is not brought about by a difference in the arrangement of a single instrument,

but by the positive substitution of another instrument for the original. There is not only a difference of degree, as manifested in an incomprehensible fidelity of reproduction in the one case, but there is a difference of kind as displayed in the relative spheres of activity filled by the twin intelligences. The experiments which, from the time of Braid of Manchester onward to our own day, have been pursued with an unceasingly scientific exactitude have convinced us of the character of those spheres. The business of the objective brain is to plan, to will, to guide, to ratiocinate. The function of the subjective mind is to absorb and indelibly to record *all* experience, but, in spite of its prodigious riches of material, it is so poor a craftsman that—unaided by its comrade—it can do nothing in construction. But it can dream most monstrously and wildly, for it has the weltering chaos of the Everything from which to draw its inspirations.

The objective twin is that by whose aid we build houses and construct machinery, and arrange "Trusts" in beef and tobacco. The subjective twin is the one by whose aid we go mad—unless we get him properly into harness, in which case he can turn our houses into Aladdin's palaces, and can teach the best of mechanicians things he never guessed about his own business, and can make such an affair of a trade combination that it shall be as intrinsically majestic as an empire. The subjective twin is, in short, the soul of genius. It is where the two minds are in close contact that we have such manifestations as Plato and Verulam, Shakespeare and Goethe, Balzac and Scott, Newton and Pascal afford mankind. But the extraordinary part of the matter is that we may take it as proven to the reasonable mind that the stores of gathered experience which are made to

shine so richly in the pages of the great are rivalled in the possession of the very stupid and ignorant, if only there were a means of getting at them in the brains of these latter, where they are indubitably locked up—useless treasure-houses of which not even the owner has the key. Hodge's experience is not Shakespeare's, but imagine now that Hodge could lay hold of that subliminal "subjective" for a time and make guided use of it, how do you suppose you and I would feel beside a man who had forgotten *nothing* since his first sensation on being born? It is more than conjecture, as I have said already, that this prodigious mental wealth belongs to every one of us, but we are not as yet at anything like the full fruition of it.

But how does all this tend to throw any light at all upon the question of the soul's enduring vitality? It is established along those lines of inquiry by the pursuit of which the main fact quoted here has been brought to demonstration that the faculties peculiar to the subjective mind are most luxuriantly displayed, and are displayed, too, with the completest precision, where the control of the objective mind is most completely removed. Nothing will be cheaper or more misguided than to quote the immediately obvious case of madness as disposing of the question. In dementia, of whatever kind, it is evident that the control of the objective mind is more or less removed, but it is hardly in dementia that we expect to find the clearest revelations of the subjective twin. A partial revelation is sometimes to be found there, and it is probable that some of the loveliest of our mystics were men of broken brain. Whatever may yet be held to be established with respect to psychic inquiry goes to prove that the physical states which most

nearly approach death are those in which the subjective mind secures its completest freedom and shows its most striking powers. This is a fact which may prove to be of prodigious significance. Be it observed that there is no legitimate room for doubt as to this one thing: *The subjective mind does not forget.* It stores up everything of which it takes cognisance, and it will seem strange if Nature, which does so little without a purpose, has no reason whatever for so extraordinary a secretion. The honey of knowledge thus hived throughout a lifetime is only of occasional service to the many, and is not a continuous diet even for those whom we worship as men of genius. For the most part, it would seem to go to waste. It would seem to go all to waste save one drop in a million. "In Memoriam" warns us that Nature is prodigally careless—"of fifty seeds, She often brings but one to bear." But is there any instance in the material world in which she hoards on so vast a scale as this for the mere sake of wasting?

Here are three truths, tested, and again tested. There is a faculty in man—call it what you will—which registers whatever impressions are brought to it, whether they be psychical or physical, and does not surrender them when its possessor is increasingly deprived of reason. This register becomes valuable with every year and hour, and were it completely open to inspection would be of inestimable worth. It is most accessible to its owner when he is furthest removed from the conditions which are associated with physical life. Now, what shall we say of this? Is it not at least worth thinking of? I make no disguise of the fact that I am a pilgrim in search of hope, but I strive not to be too easily deluded. It does not occur to me that this is a three-decker in

which I can defy the deep. But if it be only a plank which will help patch a hole in my canoe it is something. There are better things than despair in the world, and hope is one of them.

### FACING THE INEVITABLE.

IT is a common experience to read of one who has ventured out on an heroic enterprise that he has faced danger, wounds, privation, "death itself." As if death were so clearly the last thing a brave man would encounter that danger and wounds and privation would be no more than a fleabite in comparison. Yet many millions pass through life to whom these evils—reputed the smaller—are unknown, and it is appointed unto all men once to die. The universal experience—that which no man or woman escapes, or hopes to escape—that which is lightly contemplated, so long as it does not threaten near at hand—is held to embody the extreme of misfortune; the very climax and ultimate of terror. We popularise the thought in the phrase in which we speak of death as the King of Terrors. Death is, in fact, a somewhat less momentous thing than being born, for birth not only implies death as an unavoidable sequence, but also implies many happenings between, which the general experience of mankind unites in describing as in the main tragic, disillusionising, full of labour and sorrow. Is not the end of every life a tragedy, asks Carlyle, though the close were a peasant's and his bed of heath? For my own part I can find but little reason in the thought. Our tears at the death of a dear friend are tributary to our own loss, or to that of those others whom he leaves behind to mourn

him. We do not grieve in behalf of *our dead*. Our pangs are for the living, whether our sense of loss be purely concerned with ourselves or distributed to others who sorrow with us for the banishment of a beloved or helpful presence.

It is not fitting that anything which is of universal certainty should be regarded with abhorrence, or that its contemplation should be rejected by those who are doomed to experience it. Robert Louis Stevenson in the epitaph he wrote for himself sounds a note which appeals strongly to the sympathies. "Glad did I live," he writes, "and gladly die, And I laid me down with a will." There is a sturdy manhood here. It is the right welcome for the end which comes when the strenuous day is over. Walter Savage Landor said very nearly the same thing in other words. "I've warmed both hands before the fire of Life, And feel that I am ready to depart." The fight is fought. It was worth fighting. Vale! There speaks the man. But in that same epitaph of Stevenson's another note is struck—"This be the verse you grave for me, Here he lies where he longed to be." And the heart of the true man says "No" to it. The writer's own heart clamoured "No" to it through many valiant and triumphant years of labour and sickness, and vanquished it in every hour apart from those rare moments of surrender which even the bravest spirit knows at times. That is a profound truth in Tennyson's "Two Voices": "No life that breathes with human breath, Has ever truly longed for death." It is life that we desire, and the fancied wish for the surcease of it would vanish with one full pulse of the heart, with the kindling of one spark of intellectual vigour, with the drawing of one breath of youth. We may weary of sickness,

of misfortune, of mistrust, of failure, of pain, of remorse ; we may hurry out of life to be rid of them. But our flight is not from life ; it is from that which poisons life.

Life is the dearest of all possessions, and no man ever desired to surrender it. A something which rather appertains to death than to life may appear inseparable from it, and only to be escaped by its abandonment. Give a man in decent measure that for which he wishes, and he will never ask to die. Give him very sparingly indeed that for which he wishes, and he will hold on in spite of odds so long as he can cling. Give him nothing of what he wishes, but leave him the bare hope of it, and till Hope dies he will not ask to go. But, dearly valued as it may be, the loss of it is not in itself a tragedy. To be stricken down by the inexorable hand when you can see nothing before those who have lived by you and through you but a prolonged and mournful struggle with fate—that is tragic. To leave a work incompletely done, to see the hope of a lifetime dwindle into nothing—that is tragic. To lie long in pain and to foresee sorrow and deprivation for wife and child—that is tragic. But it is not tragic to pass away from these things and the knowledge of them—it is not tragic to enter into rest and be at peace.

There is a dignity in death which descends even upon the basest. There is a passage of really tremendous power in "Our Mutual Friend," one of the finest things one of the greatest masters of fiction has left to us. Rogue Riderhood, the foul scoundrel that he is, is clothed in a strange terror and wonder whilst he hangs between life and death in the upper chamber of the "Three Fellowship Porters." Where is that invisible something which was really he whilst

he lies comatose, and the watchers cannot tell whether he has given up the ghost, or whether the mystic occupier will return? Who knows? The Rogue with the foul scum of the river in his hair, at his lips, is at the portals of the mystery. Will he pass beyond, and himself become a portion of that great unknown to which he seems to be speeding, or will he come back to us to be once again a despicable rag of humanity, and not a Thing whom to encounter alone and in the night would quicken the heart-beat of the boldest? He comes back, and all the glamour and the terror, the wonder and the mystery, vanish with his coming. He is Rogue Riderhood mere and simple. The dual nature of him, whatever that really was which was awful in him, is there still, but nobody troubles to think it. The most besotted and brutalised who can so much as think "This is I," were still a wonder and a mystery though he sat amidst a congregation of Shakespeares.

But to-night I heard of the death of one whom I knew only as an able practitioner in my own craft and as a genial acquaintance. Had I met him a bare few hours ago, and he had clapped me on the shoulder, I should have hailed him with delight. And now! The awe is unreasonable, but it is here, and reason will not touch it. Yet one knows that it is rather an instinct of the blood than a real prepossession of the mind, and in any serious communing with ourselves I think we find that the only abiding fear which lies in the thought of the return of those whom we have known is that there is something in us which it is vital to conceal. Mark Twain said once that the man of middle age who respects himself is lost. The purposed quaintness of the phrase cannot hide its truth. You know something about yourself which

you would not have another know, which no other will ever know with your good will. I bite my pillow sometimes in the night, remembering things upon a sudden. We may all take Hamlet's confession to ourselves. We are indifferent honest, yet we could accuse ourselves of such things that it were better if our mothers had not borne us. "Ah, Dear, but come thou back to me!" cries the bereaved poet in "In Memoriam." Yet he confesses :

How pure in heart and sound in head,  
With what divine affections bold,  
Should be the man whose heart would hold  
An hour's communion with the dead.

We dare not let ourselves be known. There is but a bare one here and there who dare so much as think the phrase : "The dead shall look me through and through."

In most things we are the slaves of our ancestors. We are the inheritors of many terrors which we should not have invented for ourselves had we been left to work out our nature from our own environment. There would be little dread of death in the mind of the average cultured man of the twentieth century if he could excise from himself that which is more potent than reason, more convincing than scientific certitude, more a part of his own being than anything he has acquired in his brief sojourn here. There are few in whom the belief still lingers that a career of a few years in one planet, an incomplete experience of one brief life, decides our course definitely and inexorably throughout eternity. For the majority of thinking men the old fixed outlines of theological belief have been more than half obliterated. We do not any longer picture to ourselves those unfortunates of God's making whom the "lawless and incertain

thought" of quite recent date "imagined howling." It has all gone out of the minds of men—the eternity of anguish, and the cloudland of an unproductive beatitude—save here and there for a belated zealot. We can argue only from what we know, but we see everywhere that cause precedes effect, that effect follows cause, and that the two are always in the strictest and straitest harmony with each other. Every evil deed has an evil offspring, but a wicked bacillus is not the parent of any Kraken of the deep. The errors of a lifetime are not appropriately visited by an eternal chastisement which fails to redeem the error. Men are so rooted in the belief that all Nature works to scale that the old superstitions are passing out of sight and credence.

But man's reasoned beliefs are so far from being the whole of his spiritual equipment, and are so far, indeed, from having any real control over those more genuine beliefs which he has intellectually abandoned, that he is still a prey to the emotions which were first called into being when his cast-off fancies were not only potent with him, but were held to be fixed and indisputable. It is only the coarse and ignorant nature which still holds to the ancient idea of the awful Nethergloom, with its unappeasable physical torment and its eternal clamour of unavailing repentance. But the world lived so long and so intensely with that conception that the thought of death is not freed from it even in emancipated minds. It was a philosopher who spoke of himself as going in search of *le grand peut-être*, the huge maybe, the great perhaps. The perhaps is still there, and will, so far as we can guess, be there for ever, but it is there in a simpler form. There may be, or there may not be, a survival of the conscious ego—a perpetuation of

the personality—a continuance of that which once thought and felt and joyed and suffered here as a unit of intelligence. But all analogy and all reason are loud and fervent in their protest against the bare possibility of a cataclysmal change in character, capacity or fate. We may cease. The possibility is always there. We may continue. Again the possibility is always there. But if we continue there is nothing more assured than that our character, capacity, and fate will be subject to law, and to a law which knows no variableness nor shadow of a turning. We shall be what we have deserved to be. Our endowments and our limitations will be those which we have gathered for ourselves. As a man soweth so shall he also reap. Even that and no other.

That which is common to our knowledge does not necessarily cease to be amazing. The fortitude of the Christian martyr to whose hope Heaven opened radiant from the arena or the stake ; the dauntless courage of the soldier of the Cross or the Crescent whose immediate and eternal reward beckons him from beyond the gates of death ; the devotion of the breech-clothed Dervish of the desert whom the infidel bullet dismisses to an instant Paradise ; all these are wonderful. But they are not so surprising as that fortitude, which is not only common to our knowledge but to our experience—that strange hardihood which sustains us all on the razor-edge of life and death, holding our uncertain balance here in the perfect certainty that we shall eventually topple over, and not knowing from one moment to another when our time may come. They fall thick about us ; they drop like hail ; the young, the old, the stalwart, the feeble ; and though there is in each one of us, believer and unbeliever, gentle and simple, wise and unwise,

the inherited rooted fear of the end, and the reluctance to meet it ; though to some the end is big with eternal fate, we live as if it were not, and all men think all men mortal but themselves.

## PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

I have always thought that the educational processes of the soul are probably harmonious and continuous. When I entered upon the consideration of this question I was not aware of any proposal to hold that memorial and petitionary service at St. Paul's Cathedral, about which Christian England is now disputing. It is interesting and curious to find the question to which I have been trying to find a dispassionate and logical answer suddenly converted into a centre of polemical discussion. It will be still more interesting to find whether the rational or the superstitious ideal will have prevailed at the end of the struggle. The fact which appears most evident to me is that the notion that the inhabitants of this earth are in some vague way divorced from those processes which govern the rest of the universe is at the very root of the whole matter. The system of which we form a part, and the innumerable systems which surround it, are childishly imagined to inhabit an eternity from which we are debarred. We are finite and confined to time. They are infinite and a portion of eternity. The obvious answer is that we are *a portion* of the universal scheme. If we accept the doctrine of the immortality of the soul at all, it is evidently futile to argue that we are not immortal here and now. You cannot have a comparative scale of immortality—as immortal, more immortal,

most immortal. The whole idea is either a fact or a fiction, and that "plunge into eternity" of which we read and hear so much in ecclesiastical teaching is demonstrably a myth from whichever side you approach it. Grant the immortality of the soul and we are in eternity already. Deny it and there exists no eternity into which we can be plunged.

Here indeed is the crux of the whole question which is at this moment agitating Christian believers. Those who believe in the efficacy of prayer for the dead have grasped at least the thought of a possible harmonious progress from state to state, a condition of being in which nothing is inexorable or immutable, a condition in which cause and consequence have not ceased to be related to each other. Those who, whilst still conserving the belief in an everlasting existence, condemn prayer for the dead as illogical and even blasphemous must necessarily conceive a condition in which all the thrift of Nature, as we know her, is abolished in favour of an eternal profitless waste, and in which the laws of cause and effect obtain no longer. The order of the only world we know is that a transgression of law is visited, as Huxley puts it, by a box on the ear, and that, as a result of repeated admonition of this practical kind, we have learned all we know of justice, morals, hygiene, and civilisation in general. What we know we have learned by an experience of pain. The sheep farm, the cotton field, the textile mill, the brick-kiln are our enforced responses to the results of climate, exactly as our great libraries and the ceaseless toils of literature are a practical answer to the pains inflicted upon us by ignorance and the wrongful habits of thought which spring from it. In brief, we recognise everywhere the fact that suffering is employed amongst us as a driving power.

If we are asked to believe that prayer for the dead is opposed to the tenets of the Christian faith, we are also asked to believe that according to that faith the laws of Nature are suddenly disjointed, and that the practical and obvious lessons of this life are offered for our learning, only to be thrown away when the lesson is completed. But leaving these large speculations on one side for the instant, it may be worth while to ask whether the Christian Faith has at any time authoritatively separated itself from the permission to pray for the souls of the departed. The answer may be given at once in the negative. We must dismiss the enormous but common fallacy that the Church of Christ has at any time been represented by any one corporate body. The case of Davie Deans is not singular. In his idea the only true Church consisted of one exemplary pillar and "ane ither, which sall be nameless." Since the creed had its beginnings there have been millions of sectaries who have taken the rustic cackle of their burgh for the great stir and murmur of the world. The very record of the faith itself expresses the widest divergences of belief as to the ultimate fate of man, and no impartial reader of the Fourth Gospel, the Apocalypse, and the Pauline letters can fail to see that St. John gives a perfect support to Origen, whose faith was in the ultimate salvation of all, that John of Patmos lends a perfect support to St. Augustine, whose belief was in the absolute and lasting condemnation of the damned, or that St. Paul holds a sort of dexterous tight-rope position between the two.

Newman, in his "Grammar of Assent," speaks of the deliberate exclusion of all pronounced opinion on this question from the formularies of the English Church, and of the comparative freedom claimed

even by Roman Catholics. In the famous case arising out of the "Essays and Reviews" Frederic Dennison Maurice vindicated the right of English clergymen to perfect freedom of opinion with regard to the doctrine of eternal punishment. The late Archbishop of Canterbury expressly declared prayer for the dead to be lawful according to the doctrine of the English Church. Sir James Stephen, in his "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography," wrote of this question as having created "a whirlpool of interminable controversy, roaring in endless circles over a dark and bottomless abyss," but in truth if men could only bring themselves to survey it in a spirit of philosophical detachment, the whole business is simple enough. The unrecognised author of the Book of Enoch is the first person who ever gave substance to the idea of a lasting hell, and he gave it a local habitation which is now so universally accepted as ludicrous that it is useless to argue against him. His theory was accepted by the Jews, and Christ, whilst refusing it all acceptance in His parables and in His individual teachings, made use of the popular concept with the warning, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." The early Christians numbered many who leaned to the milder view of Origen as against the sterner belief of his great antagonist. The Church has been divided on this matter from then until now. The Roman Church and the followers of the Orthodox Greek faith have never accepted the belief in a lasting damnation. The ecclesiastical legal authorities of the Reformed Church of England have left belief optional on either side.

One recognises clearly the fear which animates those who are agitating in regard to this question. It is lest we should be "Romanised." Speaking for myself

alone, that is a thing which does not concern me in the least degree. I know full well that this free England of ours will never be "Romanised" in the sense that liberty of thought will be enthralled, and that the general run of men born on this soil and nurtured on its traditions will never again bend their necks to the yoke of those Church politicians who in every age have stoned the prophets and slain those who were sent unto them. "My faith," wrote the greatest poet of the last century—or so I think him—"is large in time." He showed elsewhere that his faith was larger in the eternity of which our human time is but so small a part, however it may last; and on this very topic of which I have been writing he spoke, "in large, divine, and comfortable words":

If thou shouldst never see my face again  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

In common with the great mass of my countrymen, I shall be compelled to stay away from the celebration in St. Paul's, but if it be an act of blasphemy (according to the doctrine of any Little Bethel) to ask God to have mercy on the souls of those many ignorant and simple men who fell for England in the late campaign, I will very willingly incur such risk as I may run. Things have come to a pass indeed when it is a crime to ask for mercy—when that inconscient dream-demon of a God of whom the world has so long had fears and visions is to make an offence of the very plea for pardon. I, for one, will not believe it or

tolerate it for a second. Give us back the theory of blind Chance from which we have emerged ! Give us anything rather than the idea of an Omniscient, Omnipresent, and All-Powerful God who counts a plea for the meanest of His creatures as a crime !

## REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

THE question of Reincarnation has taken a deeper and stronger root in the minds of average English people than I should, until a quite recent time, have imagined. One has, of course, been aware of the existence of Theosophic societies, and of the dissemination of Theosophic literature, but it comes as something of a surprise to learn the extent to which the philosophy of the East has proved itself congenial to the Western mind. The surprise is increased when one recalls the very small space of time which has elapsed since the first attempt to popularise the theme was made. A handful of scholars, another handful of thoughtful Europeans resident in the East, and a few scattered lovers of the Occult made up all the people of this country who had more than a casual and misleading notion of its mysteries before Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia," the "Isis Unveiled" of Mme. Blavatsky, and Mr. Sinnett's work on "Esoteric Buddhism" were given to the public. But it is not at all to be marvelled at that when once the austere and beautiful creed of the great Buddha was set before English readers in its purity it found willing students. It is one of the great religions of the world. It has inspired the saints and sages of the greater part of Asia for hundreds upon

hundreds of years. It embodies a noble and profound philosophy, and next to the Ethic of Christ, which is immeasurably the divinest expression of spiritual morality yet given to mankind, it reveals the loftiest ideal of human duty.

Human religions have body as well as soul, and the body of the great Eastern creed is too passive, too lazy, too detached from the urgent duties and interests of life to recommend itself very largely to the Occidental mind. On its spiritual side, however, it is easily accessible to the Anglo-Saxon, the Teutonic, and the Latin intelligence, and there is no doubt that it is doing much to modify the general religious outlook of Europe and America. The idea of Reincarnation teaches that where an advance has been deserved it is achieved, and achieved in precise and unvarying proportion to desert. Except in the rare instances where the soul has so profited by its earthly experiences as to be prepared for translation to the perfect life it eliminates the idea of an immediate state of beatitude. But it has to be observed also that it eliminates likewise the idea of an immediate fall from which there is no recovery. It is an emphatic and completely literalised expression of the thought that "As a man soweth, so shall he also reap." And whether it be true or untrue it is certainly juster and more logical that in a future life the environment of the soul shall be determined by its own fitness for it, rather than that it should be lifted to an eternity of happiness or hurled to an eternity of misery in recognition of the best or the worst spent life that human being ever led.

The doctrine of punishment and reward as held by the orthodox implies that the soul which has had no real or apparent chance of finding salvation in this

world shall have no chance whatever of finding it in the next. It is quite safe to say that this belief has driven millions of minds to rebellion, and has laid a heart-breaking weight on millions whose native impulses were towards faith and holiness. The orthodox doctrine certainly implies, per contra, that the vilest of mankind may by an act of faith escape this appalling destiny, but it is an integral part of the belief that many have made themselves incapable of that act, and it is not conceivable that any creature who could attain to it would refuse to purchase immunity at such a rate. No man ever merited heaven. Eternal happiness is the gift of Grace. No man ever deserved hell. That is reached by a refusal to accept the gift of Grace. But man is not self-created, and if his spiritual constitution be so arranged that he does not care to seek the gift of Grace he is scarcely to be held entirely responsible in a case on which such awful issues depend. Nor is there in relinquishing the orthodox creed in favour of Reincarnation any of that fear of the surrender of a salutary influence which discerns a real danger in the abandonment of the old belief in the doctrine of punishment and reward. The difference is that, whereas the orthodox idea of penalty is disproportionate and ineffectual, the idea of punishment in Reincarnation is in exact measure with mistakes made, and suffering is inflicted only as a means of enlightenment.

On the one side a life misled for twenty, forty, or eighty years brings on the evil-doer a chastisement which does not satisfy itself by paying each day of criminal indulgence with a thousand years of pain, or a thousand thousand, but protracts a fruitless agony for ever. How such a belief ever found its way

into the brain of man is one of the riddles of the world, and how it was ever supposed that the Being who ordained so monstrous and so purposeless a scheme was all-powerful, all-wise, and all-good must be left to the wonder of the high intelligences who will explore the history of human error a million years hence. And yet sane men believed it, sane men and pious, tender women.

On the other side punishment has no vindictive aspect. It is wholly reformatory. Here is a set of rules to which it is your business to conform. Infringe them and you suffer ; cease to infringe them and they are all benevolent. These laws of Nature resemble a barbed-wire fence on either side of a path, which is both strait and straight. Keep in the middle of the road and they are a guide unto your feet. Try recklessly or blindly to force a way of your own and they will rend you. When you have done one stretch of your journey, you take a rest, and have a fresh start. The poor old set of nerves you have exacerbated and worn out in your earliest stages is renewed for you. Your experiences survive. You are wiser on this stage of the journey than you ever were before. You learn slowly, but you can enhance the pace if you are careful and observant, and you can help other people to enhance theirs. Here a man's whole concern is to recognise the barbs on the guiding wire and to avoid them. It is not a doctrine of unconcern for others, for selfishness is one of the barbs, and one which inflicts the unpleasankest kind of wound. You travel from strength to strength, which is another way of saying from absorbed experience to absorbed experience, and at last your wisdom is accomplished. You know your way, and you need the wounding guide no more.

If it were possible to submit the two postulates to the traditional native of another and a far-removed sphere who is supposed to know nothing of human perplexities whilst able easily to solve them by the intelligence which characterises his own plane of existence, it is not difficult to imagine which of these two conceptions he would regard as the more just and reasonable. If he learned that—in the view of the human insect who submitted the problem—the earlier-cited creed was beautiful and hopeful, whilst the later was positively repulsive, he would probably experience a surprise.

And I turn now to the old indeterminable problem of Fate and Free-will. If Reincarnation is to be accepted it is very evident that a benevolent tyranny is at work, which will insist, in the long run, upon Good as the goal of Ill. Where the object of a whole universe is to compel a creature to accept its laws, it is impossible to assert Free-will in the large and determining sense, but when logic has done its utmost, the universal experience of mankind preaches to us a free-will in respect to at least the minor circumstances of our lives. The purely materialistic view of the case is that man is the product of heredity and environment, and that these two afford the only influences by which he can be directed. Given a provocation to do this or that, he will do it or leave it undone precisely as the influences of heredity and environment may dictate. We will suppose the provocation to be in the direction of an evil act to which the victim of temptation knows himself to be prone. He prays for help and he refrains. He prays, says the Materialist, because he could not help praying. By heredity and environment he was forced to pray at that juncture, and it was his

own nature which prevailed with him. Or he recognises his danger and is inclined to pray against it, but he does not give that impulse scope. He falls. Heredity and environment will answer for it all.

Whether he enlist in a life of worthless self-indulgence, or whether he strain every fibre of his will toward good, heredity and environment are still used to explain him, to hold him neither blameworthy nor praiseworthy, but to reduce him to a mere mechanism, a magnetic mockery, driven this way or that by a force against which it is in vain for him to buffet. If this immediate ancestor is not answerable for your tendencies that remote progenitor may have been. Thus a wicked grandfather's influence may be weeded out of one grandson's nature, and not weeded out of another grandson's nature, and so on to infinity. It may as well be confessed that if you once accept the premisses, the conclusion is not to be escaped, but I for one will not accept the premisses. I choose by preference to let my conscience use the stick, and to tell myself that I have played here the fool and there the coward, and that it was in me—as I know it was, and as every intellectually honest man knows it in his own case in his inmost heart—to have done otherwise and more nobly. I stand with the poet :—We are

Not only cunning casts in clay :  
 Let Science prove we are, and then  
 What matters Science unto men,  
 At least to me ? I would not stay.

Let him, the wiser man, who springs  
 Hereafter up from childhood, shape  
 His action like the greater ape.  
 But I was *born* to other things.

And there, so far as I am concerned, is the conclusion of the whole matter. When the Materialist has proved

his case to the hilt I *know* that he is talking nonsense. And he knows it, too, every time he feels inclined to stop for a laze and a pipe whilst the printer waits for his copy. He has a tendency in favour of an easy half-hour, and he has a tendency to finish his work in time for the post, and it is he who decides between the two, and not the surviving spirit of any ancestor remote or near. And when you come to hunt the argument backwards to its source you find that if nobody had ever had a will of his own the whole race would have been content to bask in sloth.

Then assuming that there is a central truth in the doctrine of Reincarnation, and that this truth is expressed in an intelligent design, we are forced to conclude that the whole universe is in a condition of continual progress—an eternal procession of the physical and spiritual elements. Let us start at the root of the latest accredited guess of science. It is that there is a form of life in all things, and that the inorganic life of the earth itself, which is productive of electric waves and other remarkable phenomena, is—in certain conditions which we have not yet fathomed—capable of being translated into a protoplasmic slime, which is capable of being translated into amœbic or unicellular animal forms, which again are capable of being translated into insect, reptile, fish, bird, and mammal, until at last we arrive at man, who is in his final development fitted to attain to a something godlike and as yet only to be imagined.

Thus ocean mud and ooze and the very rocks on which we tread are embarked on an eternal progress—and in each rank there is an added sentience—an increased consciousness of individuality—each order momently recruited from a lower—drawing, straining,

upward always—from the slime to the protozoa, from the protozoa to the simian, from the simian to man, from man to the spirit fitted for absorption into the Divine. Nature works as an unresting recruiting agent, for ever enlisting the lower into the higher form ; and if this be so—we may willingly acknowledge the enormous potentiality of that “if”—it follows that the most highly developed forms of animal life are continually being drawn into the ranks of humanity. In their earlier incarnations they will seem barely human, but as experience is added to experience they grow increasingly humanised, until at last they blossom in the supreme Caucasian mind.

### A PLEA FOR FAITH.

IN what I have written it has been my purpose and my hope to show that every process of reason and analogy of which the human mind is capable leads irresistibly to the conclusion that the universe is controlled by one great Intelligence, moving everywhere and always to one settled end. I have tried to show that the pretensions of Materialism are not only fallible but untenable, and that it needs a vastly greater credulity to accept the theory of a Godless universe than it needs to accept even the more superstitious forms of faith. It is my profound belief that God veritably is, and that it is the one thing most pressingly incumbent upon the human mind to search, and, as far as may be, to find out His purposes. It is my profound belief that, in exact measure with our success in this search, the world of mankind will learn to adjust itself—not only in respect to its spiritual relationships with the Creator, as we commonly

understand the phrase, but in all the affairs of life, international, political, commercial, and domestic, scientific, artistic, hygienic, and mechanical.

I have confessed long ago that I was forced out of those forms of belief in which I was born and bred, and that I have learned to regard all forms of faith as being of a relative and partial value. I believe that in a very real sense each one of the great accepted creeds is a Divine revelation, and I am at war with no one of them. The sincerest Christian may believe all that I believe and retain every element of his faith ; and it is plain that if that faith were universally and truly held the perplexities and sorrows of the world would be so far banished that we should have reached a millennium of fraternity. To my own poor thinking, the man who attempts to destroy the faith of a Christian is a malignant fool ; and if I cannot attain to that faith in any sense which would be held orthodox by any of the Churches, I can at least recognise in it beyond comparison the noblest instrument yet discovered for the regeneration of mankind. But here is the difficulty of the whole matter. The theologian takes the silver sixpence of his creed, and having traced a pencil outline round it assumes himself to have bounded the whole infinite of spiritual truth. He has a compendium of it, perhaps—nay, say rather that he has assuredly a compendium of it, for no faith could become general and survive through long periods and under varied conditions unless it had within it the central thought which makes it vital.

Strange it is, and strange beyond strangeness, that in the gravest department of human thought the unessential symbol of a thing should everywhere be more highly valued than the thing itself—that the book should seem less estimable than the binding. There

is no one of the great creeds which is not essentially the same, and whilst we squabble about the glosses on the margin we disregard the oneness of the text. I find myself implored not to unite myself with the uninstructed Sabbath orators who preach atheism on Clapham Common. I have no more temptation to unite myself with those gentlemen than I have to associate myself with the conventicle in which the friend of Davie Deans and “ane other” were the sole repositories of the true faith. The truth is so large a thing that it was never yet embraced within the limits of a single Church, yet every Little Bethel claims it for a sole possession. The brainless howler who has listened to somebody who has skimmed a newspaper article based on a magazine review of Haeckel, and who then goes forth to peddle his folly in the London parks, is not on a much lower intellectual level than the intemperate advocate of a petty schism without the acceptance of which he declares that none of us shall see salvation. The one safe rule with regard to dogma is to throw it out of window. The inward assurance of a truth is one thing ; the insolent assertion that it is the whole of truth is another.

There are three things in controversy which are mischievous. The first of these is the assumption that the acceptance of one form of truth is necessarily antagonistic to another. Truth is a many-faceted yet homogeneous thing. We may adapt by an inversion the majestic image of Shelley :

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity.

In like manner the mind stains truth. We turn the one-coloured light of prejudice on the multi-coloured light of reason—by which process we may make

any colour in the rainbow out of white, which is the pure fusion of all colours. The next mischief is expressed in the desire to secure a dialectical triumph—to get the laugh against an adversary or to secure the vulgar advantage of turning his word against what you know to be his thought—as vile a mendacity as can be practised, although it is applauded and admired in disputations on theology and politics. The third fault of debate comes where an obstinate opinion is wilfully indurated by discussion. Now, I have already expressed my belief in the sincerity of the critic whom I have under examination, but two of these faults are his in such a degree that I am justified in using him as a type.

He finds me saying that the popular conceptions of God are inadequate, and that the religious thinkers of the world, starting from a distorted idea, have been compelled to resort to many devices to explain away a Deity of their own creation. Upon this he builds the truly astonishing conclusion that I am trying to “imagine this world without some controlling power.” He finds me reasoning in favour of the immortality of the soul—not as commonly conceived of as a half-immortality, which begins with the birth of the human unit here, but as having its roots in the primal and eternal Source of things—and he asks : “Am I to be . . . . a man whose sole idea is that the life he lives here is the only life he will live ? ” These misunderstandings must appear wonderful to the man who has trained himself to attempt to grasp an unfamiliar meaning, but they are to be explained. To say “This limited and illogical God is an invention of man ” is not to say God is an invention of man, nor is it to say that God is limited and illogical. Yet it may well look like it to one who feels intensely that

a something precious to him is being assailed. So with the second error, which, wild as it is, has its excuses. The statement seized upon is that the orthodox idea of eternal bliss and eternal misery is unjust and illogical. Here is a man who does not believe in heaven or hell. Therefore he believes that this life is all.

It is rather pathetic. It would have been at one time disheartening to find one's carefully expressed meaning turned actually topsy-turvy—to find the plea for a more reverent conception of God converted into a denial of His existence—the argument that all life is infinitely progressive construed into the statement that there is no hereafter. But since I began my present work I have encountered hundreds of similar instances, and I am case-hardened.

One thing my critic urges which is worth a serious thought. It crops up often in my correspondence when I am engaged in the consideration of a speculative theme. It is that it is better not to seek to know, if the search imperils faith in but a single case. This is the most impossible of doctrines, and would be absurd under any circumstances, but in a world where a regular army is organised for the actual destruction of faith nothing could be so fatal as for the truth-seeker to stand aside. If he be what he professes he will do no harm, and to find for himself a rational standing-place from which he can look at the immortal chances which surround him and his fellows is his first duty. “God help me!” says Luther, “I can no other.” Suppose we conceive for a moment and for the sake of the argument alone that the question of the existence of God were demonstrable on one side or the other. It may be admitted that the discovery of the truth would not affect the truth

itself. None the less on the one hand would the universe move upward in its eternal gyres, and none the less on the other would the blind and self-created laws of matter scourge us or caress us as they do to-day. Yet this fact leaves the kernel of the question untouched, and that kernel is reached only when we realise the insatiable hunger of the spirit of man, which demands all things and is not satisfied with knowledge.

Much that was orthodox and looked impregnable fifty years ago has vanished and will return no more. Its passing caused bitter grief to many, and was marked by cries of anguish and protest. There were men who clung desperately to the creed of eternal damnation, as if it were their only ark of safety in the crash and ruin of the creeds. Take away the belief in hell and humanity is undone, for if there is no monstrous injustice to balance a grotesque, unearned beatitude, there can be no heaven. That has gone, and much that hung on it has gone with it. Much that is still orthodox is palpably doomed, and laments are raised to-day that the pillars of faith are being shaken. But an appeal to the history of mankind shows that with every destruction which has fallen upon belief a loftier and purer creed has issued out of its decay. So far as evidence goes, faith looks indestructible. "Faith and form are sundered in the night of fear." Faith survives, but the form dies when faith has parted from it. A thousand creeds have perished, and at the fall of each there has gone up an exceeding bitter cry that faith has flown and has left the world without a comforter, and even whilst the clamour rises the new faith stands there to smile its promise, loftier, lovelier, nobler than the old.

What Avatar awaits us no man can do more than guess, but that dogma after dogma has ceased to have power over the general mind is no truer than that the forces of change are still at work. Let those who fear the decay of faith take this for comfort. The world has never discarded a religious thought, or even so much as a symbol, which, in the interests of humanity at large, it would have been wiser to conserve. The past is the prophet of the future, and the thing that has been is the thing that shall be. Those who protest against the evanishing of the old landmarks are blind to the rising of the spiritual tide which obscures them one by one. "The old order changeth, yielding place to new. And God fulfils Himself in many ways."

The best of us think half thoughts, and because our mortal span is bound within its three or four score years it comes natural to us to forget that Vast of time which God has at His disposal. That is why we are in a hurry with our amendments on the programme of the world. We fret and fume, and would shift our skins because it looks as if it were vital to us to have this or the other thing done, or at least fairly started before our particular genius for reform is cancelled, and our little light goes out. It does not matter. God can afford to wait with an illimitable patience. We look at the Valley of the Dordogne or at the Caves of Kent, or we think of the discovery of prehistoric human remains in Kentucky, and we see that man has existed on this planet for perhaps hundreds of thousands of years. Since the time when he first sought shelter from the elements and the fearsome comrades of his earliest day—since, in the dim beginnings of his mind, he first knew himself to be a something separate—he has climbed, little by little, to a height from which he can survey—sometimes with a too

complacent scorn—the various savageries and ignorances through which he has been urged or guided.

But as yet it has hardly dawned upon him that in his slow upward toil each step perceptible to the modern eye has cost him thousands and thousands of years. Looking back over many and many a wrinkle of the monstrous hill he has climbed since he began his march, he only half discerns the degrees by which he rose from the lowest animalisms to such dominion as he has achieved. He surveys with a kind of pity—such as the spirits of a future age will feel in looking back upon ourselves—his earliest conceptions of social life and imitative art, and those rude implements which first helped him in his conflict with the rocks. The backward outlook is immense, and it shows one slow yet unrelenting upward progress. The thing which has been is the thing which shall be. The past is the only prophet of the future, and the measure of the depths below us is the measure of the heights which wait to be surmounted.

### FAITH OR UN-FAITH ?

I stretch lame hands of faith and grope  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope.

WHAT is “the larger hope,” and what right have we to trust in it? Is it not patent to the eyes of all that the Destiny or Providence which rules what we know of the universe is either careless or cruel, and that injustice is everywhere rampant? One dare not deny the reality of suffering unless one is a Christian Scientist, and not even then if one has happened recently to have a corn trodden upon. Pain is a very real thing,

and on a candid and fearless inquiry it will probably be found the commonest of conditions. Beast and bird and fish and insect live for the most part in a constant danger and a constant sense of it, and that is one of the most real of sufferings. Everything is devouring and is torturing to devour. Nature is red in tooth and claw with rapine, and, judging from our own knowledge, we can arrive at no other belief than that every physical organism, whether it is or is not deliberately so constructed, is a cunning instrument for the hand of Pain to play upon, in an unending fugue of varied agonies.

That is by no means a happy picture, but it is a true one, and I personally am not going to shirk it because of any intellectual cowardice. It is apparently easy for some people to lie about it as the Christian Scientists do, and to say that there is no such thing as pain or death. What practical good they get out of an imposture of that sort which is exposed in the daily and hourly experience of all of them one does not know, nor is it, perhaps, very urgently needful to inquire. Pain makes up the greater part of the life of sentient things, and on the assumption that our conjoint existence here is the result of anything but a fortuitous concourse of chances there are only three opinions open to our choice. Our guiding and controlling Destiny is malevolent. Or, He or It is careless. Or, pain has a useful and benevolent place in the universal scheme of things. No one of these suppositions is absurd within itself or logically untenable; but though it may be to some extent a question of temperament and training as to which of them will most strongly recommend itself to the intelligence, there are stronger presumptions in favour of one of them than are to be found for either of the others.

Let us envisage the fact quite boldly, for nothing is to be got by a reserve of honest judgment. Let us admit that the greater part of the human race has never lived in anything like continuous comfort. Hunger, stripes, insult, and all conceivable forms of ravage have beset the vast majority in all human communities which have historic record. The first essentials to mere animal contentment are food and warmth. These poor requirements have been left unfulfilled in the experience of millions beyond computation. Even in these days, in which the physical conditions of the human race have much improved, there are more people who are inadequately catered for than live in a reasonable comfort. The people who are quite wholesome in body, who have no twinges of gout, or dyspepsia, or any other of the innumerable troubles with which we are familiar, are very few, and their immunity lasts for the briefest space of time. Let us make a purposed worst of it, and admit, without cavil, that the world is a miserable hole for most of us, even amongst those who count that they have some right to be reckoned contented, and that for those below us in the scale of fortune the world is very much of a penal fortress, with the *peine forte et dure* employed with a seemingly unnecessary frequency. Carlyle writes truly when he says that every last scene in life is a tragedy, though a peasant were the actor in it, and his bed of heath.

All this gives us no warrant for believing that God is either malevolent or careless. George Macdonald has somewhere a fine thought in which one of his fictional characters expresses a dread that God might be "dreaming" him! If existence were a mere rash vision of that sort it would be very horrible. At its best life does not pay for the living outside hope and

faith and duty. Simply to be dragged across this poor scene for one experience, to make a part of its troubled phantasmagoria for one lifetime, could lend but little value to the lessons of eternity. It is quite wild also to imagine that a man in so confined a sphere of space and time could fit himself either for the celestial lubberland of the vulgar Heaven or the infernal bakehouse of the vulgar Hell. But it is conceivable, and, on the whole, it appears highly probable, that what we know here is but a part of a tremendous and enduring probation, and if that should be so it is certainly easy to prove to one's own satisfaction that pain and grief have their services. All the popular images are time-worn. Gold tried in the furnace, the molten ore which is fiercely purged of dross and scoria. These similes for the perfected man are world-wide and world-old, and they are so because they express an idea with which the general experience of the world is in close sympathy. In point of fact, we do actually know that there is a real and sober sense in which suffering is good for us. In our wiser moments we know how to choose between Sparta and Capua, and all the best of us do make the choice. Those of us who are only amongst the middlings do not choose lastingly, and life's failures do not choose at all.

Mr. W. S. Gilbert, who in his time has been something more than a topsy-turvy humorist, wrote a great many years ago a sort of fairy story in which he established a theory of pain as a protective against the ills of life. In this story a man asked to be exempt from suffering, and his wish was granted him. He handled red-hot iron with impunity so far as mere sensation was concerned, but he had not done away with other ordinary processes of Nature, and he died for want of Nature's warning against danger. For

my own part, I cannot escape from a conviction of the entire truth of the theory here embodied. You sit down to play a game with Nature, says Huxley, and if you make a slip in the game Nature boxes your ears. It is an unpleasant thing when it happens, but if that is the way Providence has appointed for your instruction, it does not greatly matter that it hurts. I have had a powerful picture of a recent Indian famine sent to me lately. Prayers for rain are offered in churches and temples from Penjdeh to Colombo, but rain does not fall. Millions perish miserably. But the lesson is simple as A B C. The land has been deforested, and on deforested land rain will not fall. It is of no use to say in such a case that God is cruel or that Nature is cruel, and it is very obviously of no use to ask that natural laws shall be repealed by special grace to undo the mischiefs which have been wrought by human ignorance and idleness. Nature's lesson is plainly taught. It is taught in famine and pestilence and death, and these are stern taskmasters. But if it should in the long run be taught in such a fashion as to be permanent and unforgettable, famine and pestilence and death are not so very awful after all.

If the failures of this life were simply to act as the exemplars of the more fortunate, the chances would seem to be very unequally distributed. If the ryot of India and the fellah of Egypt and our own poor begrimed dweller in the slums are simply object-lessons to save me from damnation, I am strongly inclined to think that on the whole I would prefer to be damned. The vicarious sacrifices are too numerous and too painful for me to take pleasure or find comfort in the belief that they are compulsorily undertaken in order that my skin may be saved. But it is not, at least,

unreasonable to believe that every tub is standing on its own bottom, and that experiences *do* get equalised. There is plenty of time. There would even seem to be space enough to move in. But I would respectfully submit this one consideration in front of all: That whether the theory of the larger hope be true or no, mankind cannot possibly do better than try to believe in it, and cannot possibly do worse than reject it. If it be not true—if we are demon-ridden, or guided by an inefficient driver; if we are disdained, or are merely such stuff as the dreams of gods are made of, then there is surely nothing better for it than to make an end, and Carlyle's suggestion of universal suicide might profitably be accepted. But I remember, for my own personal sustentation, that the clearest and loftiest intellects of the world have been unfailingly on the side of hope, and though no man who values his own mental rectitude can become the slave of a convention, no man who is not overwise in his own conceit will reject the gathered opinion of his betters through all ages.

Here in brief are two postulates. One tells you that this world is a darksome tunnel through which you pass from Nowhere into Nowhere, and that on your way you are treated arbitrarily and without any sense of justice. The other tells you that you are one of a companionship of life on an endless cycle of profitable experience, and that your position and treatment are in general accord with your deserts. Now, merely as a matter of policy, which of these two beliefs were it best and more helpful to ourselves to choose? To adopt one of them will sterilise every spiritual function. To adopt the other will cheer and sustain and invigorate. If the chances between the two were logically equal I would choose that which would best fit me for the

fight in which I have to engage. I think that the chances on the whole are very much in favour of hope. That is an opinion, and of no value. But I have left the field of speculation when I say I know that I am happier and stronger and fitter under the one belief than I could ever be under the influence of the other, and even if I did a little violence to an intellectual inclination, I would choose that side. I will not hug a lie if I can help it, but of two conflicting and opposite beliefs, one of which bears Hope and the other Despair in its arms, I will choose daylight rather than dark. Apart from that personal predisposition, I am persuaded that the hopeful is the more probable.

### TENTATIVE BELIEFS.

THE master-error of those who oppose the trend of modern science is exactly similar to the master-error of those who accept its guesses with too great an eagerness. I have lately devoted some attention to the writings of those curious people who find reason for a very angry and impassioned propaganda in the belief that the earth is flat. They appear to base their singular creed far less on any evidence they can produce in its favour than upon the occasional absence of conclusive proof on the other side. It is mainly because they afford an example of the way in which a scientific problem ought *not* to be approached that it seems to be worth while to deal with them. The really scientific thinker is perfectly ready to make a clean breast of the whole matter. He does not pretend that he has arrived at an actual solution of any one of the multitudinous problems of Nature. The best we can do is to arrive at probabilities. Here

are a certain number of observed facts with regard to the existence of which it is not easy to be mistaken. The task presented to the scientific mind is simply to correlate these facts, and to make them fit in with one another in the most probable manner. To announce any scientific hypothesis whatsoever as embodying an actual certainty is to assume that no future discovery can possibly be found to cast a new light upon it: a position so manifestly absurd that no reasonable person will advance it. The utmost that science can do for us is to make an untiring examination into the phenomena of nature, and so to adjust the results of inquiry that no observed fact shall be allowed to contradict another. Where the facts are at once numerous and mutually corroborative we have a perfect right to form an hypothesis with regard to them, but no sincere thinker will claim more for the soundest theory than that it accords with facts so far as they are known.

Except in so far as they serve to illustrate a principle the believers in a flat earth are hardly worthy of serious treatment. Every astronomer admits the solitary truth on which they base their opposition to the Newtonian theory—which is simply that it makes no claim to infallibility, and is content to rest upon the corroboration of the realities of Nature so far as these realities are as yet made known to us. The most valuable of all the advances the mind of man has made from the beginning of thought is that which permits of a constant readjustment of belief. There is no stronger evidence of intellectual incapacity than is afforded by the man who is so wedded to a preconception that no accumulation of fact against it can induce him to alter his opinion. The man of science is released from the dominion of those twin-

tyrants of the mind—fear and anger. Once begin to be afraid that a cherished conviction is liable to be overturned by inquiry, and the value of inquiry is abolished. Once begin to be angry with any phase or atom of demonstrable truth, and the power of finding truth has gone out of you. The glory of true science lives in its humility—its teachableness. It says of nothing “It is finished.” It sits at the feet of Nature and strives to learn. It is eternally ready to rearrange its hypotheses on the base of truth. Its motto is not “This is thus,” but “There is reason to believe.” The genuinely scientific mind is the one absolutely fearless thing in Nature. It asks for truth, and truth alone; and if irrefragable evidence of the falsehood of the Newtonian theory were found to-morrow it would set itself quite calmly to the discovery of a more satisfactory explanation of observed phenomena.

This is the high-water mark of human advancement up till now, and the position is worthy of notice inasmuch as it is wholly modern. We have at this hour a completer emancipation of the human mind from prejudice than was ever before achieved. At this very time of writing science is engaged in the adaptation of itself to a theory of creation so novel and so startling that only a very little while ago every school of theology throughout the world would have been up in arms against it. It is very possible that the quiet acquiescence with which men of the most conservative schools of religious thought are looking on at the new discoveries and the conclusions which are being drawn from them is to be traced to that absence of dogmatic materialism which is now so much to be noticed. We congratulate ourselves, and with justice, on the tolerance of the Churches. We may, with equal justice, congratulate ourselves on the disappearance of that

old cock-a-hoop spirit which was the characteristic of a good many scientists only a few years ago. There never was a better illustration of the truth of Pope's maxim that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing than was afforded by the attitude of those pioneers of science who actually believed themselves to have solved the puzzle of the universe and to have established all things on a purely materialistic basis. With very few exceptions, the modern man of science is a man of devout mind. That is by no means to say that he is the adherent of any creed yet formulated, or likely to be formulated, by any Church, but that he has learned to recognise the infinite littleness of what he knows in comparison with the vastness of the unknown, and that he has abandoned his old attempt to measure infinity with a two-foot rule.

It has been very wisely said that the undevout astronomer is mad. The contemplation of the vastness of Nature is not more calculated to strike awe into the mind than the recognition of its infinitudes of smallness. How the whole scheme of things came about is a problem which is as far removed from the human intelligence as ever; but the wondering inquiry into the origin of that giant Force, which appears to exhibit itself alike in the whirling innumerable worlds of space and in the unit charge of electricity—that inconceivably minute atom of an atom—is not less devotional than any bending of the knees in prayer. The latest word of popularised science comes from the president of the newly instituted University of Birmingham, who confesses his belief that there is no end of inquiry and research, and that a million years hence men of the highest knowledge and the deepest insight will feel that they are “still dimly groping”—the words are memorable—“after

the great truths of God." Here indeed is the conclusion of the whole matter, so far as this present inquiry is concerned. The modern scientist is devout, which is so very different from a mere theological persuasion that there are no words to express the distance which may divide the two states of mind. The awe and wonder of the vast sum of things are within him, and it seems to me, at least, that the whole tendency of our later research and our most recent thought is to lead us through those avenues of materialism which once shadowed so heavily the spiritual hopes of man to a loftier and still loftier conception of the Great Origin.

Sir Oliver Lodge, whose noteworthy words I have just quoted, has lately published a rapid and cursory survey of the recent results of science. Fifty years ago the doctrine of the immutability of species in biology was an accepted article of faith. Twenty years ago the orthodox scientist accepted without question the supposed permanence of the atoms of which the elements are composed. These faiths are not yet dead. The new principles by which it is being attempted to displace them "have yet to stand the racket of criticism," but "they have a good chance of life, and the evidence which supports them is of no one kind but is drawn from many sources, and is clinched by many and diverse lines of argument." The first notable conclusion arrived at was that of the development of species, and the change of form into form. The next is the apparent conviction that this law of growth and change applies not only to the organic but to the inorganic. We had all been willing to believe that a cosmic dust was being drawn into nebulæ, and that the nebulæ were drawing into worlds. But we were all inclined to

think that amongst the elements actually known to man a condition of complete stability had been arrived at, and that in inorganic nature no innate energies were longer in operation.

It was startling enough when Darwin first laid his theory of the Origin of Species before the world to be confronted with the idea of a common beginning for all forms of life. It was yet more startling to be encountered with the thought that life as we have hitherto conceived of it is present in any form of inorganic matter, even in one of its manifestations only. Sir Oliver Lodge faces the problem "What is life?" only to meet it with the answer that we do not know, but that, at least, it is a process of constant change. "The organic can exist only on condition usually of growth, culmination, and decay—at any rate of change." This condition of things is now found to be existent through the whole material universe. A man of science like Sir Oliver Lodge has, of course, to be careful in his use of terms, and I notice that he avoids any suggestion of the idea that one element "generates" another in the loose and unscientific sense which may have been suggested in one of my recent articles. But it is established beyond dispute that one element can so break down as to resolve itself into another element which has no constituent of its original, and is essentially as different an entity as a father from his child. The process of generation is still obscure, but the fact of procreation is established.

The belief that in every exercise of thought and every access of emotion the brain of man undergoes a physical change unites itself naturally with these latest conclusions of science, and, as Sir Oliver Lodge observes, it is, "at any rate, a suggestive analogy" that if a material process of essentially similar sort

is found to be occurring throughout what we know as the material world—the world of dead matter—we may begin to ask, “Does all this motion correspond to some Universal Thought or Mental Activity likewise?” The human race, says Sir Oliver, has but just cast off its swaddling clothes and is beginning to look over the edge of its cradle. His outlook on the future of science is optimistic and inspiring in the highest degree. “Not always,” he writes, “will science be associated with clamour and smoke and restlessness and illiteracy and ugliness; these are the struggles and defects of childhood. Presently something calm and majestic will emerge, and the man of that day will look on the world with comprehending eyes and will rejoice in the contemplation of such a scheme of law and order and beauty as is at present possible only to a few.”

### THE FUTURE FAITH.

THE presidential address recently (September, 1904) delivered by Sir Oliver Lodge to the members of the Midland Institute will be hailed by thousands as a voice of comfort and guidance in the wilderness. It deals with the conclusions set forth by Professor Haeckel, of Jena, in that widely circulated and very positive book, “The Riddle of the Universe,” and its chief interest lies in the fact that Haeckel’s denial of the existence of God and the hope of immortality, which professes to be based on pure science, is directly countered by a man of science of equal eminence, and is countered on scientific grounds alone. The opposition which theologians of every school have offered to the philosophical assumptions of Haeckel is dis-

counted by its own inevitableness. It was a thing of course that the Churches would scout his theories, and even where the Christian critics discarded the appeal to authority, and relied upon reason only for their arguments, it was felt to be impossible that they could have entered the controversial arena with an open mind. It lay upon them as an actual duty to deny, and to that extent they had to be regarded as tainted witnesses or as judges with a bias. A man of science labours under no such imputation, and his judgment necessarily carries greater weight. Sir Oliver Lodge does not approach the case from the side of the believer, any more than a judge approaches a case in the spirit of an advocate. But in answer to each one of the important claims advanced by Haeckel he returns a definite verdict of not proven. The eminent professor of Jena announces dogmatically that the revelations of science have done away with the idea of a Creator; that they have abolished the doctrine of free will, and for ever disposed of the immortality of the soul. Haeckel has no surmises about these things. He believes them to be demonstrable, and he believes himself to have demonstrated them on scientific grounds. It will be helpful to many who, hypnotised by a great scientific reputation, have felt themselves compelled to regard these chilling conclusions as being in themselves scientific, to find that science itself repudiates them without hesitation.

Haeckel is a Monist. To him there is but one single fundamental reality in the universe whose appearances we see in an infinitude of diversity. All human ideas, emotions, perceptions, exercises of choice, and what not are manifestations of this sole reality. It is not to be denied that modern science travels for a considerable

distance on the line of this idea. It is beginning to be more and more believed that all matter of what sort soever is, in the final issue, but one substance. That may very well be so. Science leans strongly towards the belief, though at present very few scientists will be found who regard it as more than a hypothesis with many probabilities on its side. Haeckel takes it for a fact, and he goes an almost unspeakable distance further. He assumes that life itself is nothing more than a result of the gathering together in various forms and conditions of the units of which his universal substance is composed. This being so, it is obvious that there can be no thought without matter, and the existence of a purely spiritual being is an idea to be laughed at. This being so! Precisely. But his assumption that it is so is no more than an assumption. It is monstrous that a man should presume upon a guess to assert a conclusion in the name of science, and it is the more lamentable and the more to be reprehended when a purely wanton speculation is used to dismay and darken the souls of men. The words of Sir Oliver Lodge upon this surmise of Haeckel's are strong, but not a whit too strong :

If a man of science seeks to dogmatise concerning the emotions and the will, and asserts that he can reduce them to atomic forces and motions, he is exhibiting the smallness of his conceptions and gibbeting himself as a laughing-stock to future generations.

No man has yet been able to approach the conception of the life principle ; Professor Haeckel, of Jena, no more than another. He knows nothing, and what he may imagine does not matter. The problem to be solved is one of the oldest in the world. We have found definitely that brain is the organ of mind. We are well on the way to the certainty that the atoms of which the brain is composed may be ultimately

identical with those which compose a brick-end, a chunk of coal, a candle-flame, a water-drop, a pinch of arsenic. But the problem we are trying to solve does not concern itself with the composition of the organ of thought; but with the origin and character of thought itself. You have not decided on the properties of a liquid or a gas when you have determined the material of the vessel which contains it. You have come no nearer—literally no nearer at all—to the source of the vital principle when you have demonstrated the absolute oneness of the material of those organs through which it manifests itself with all other forms of apparent substance. You have not proved that thought itself is a form of substance, or that the principle of life itself is a substance, or that it cannot exist independent of substance. Say you have demonstrated that one thing *is*—you have not, therefore, demonstrated that another thing *is not*. All forms of substance are fundamentally identical. Therefore (says Haeckel) there is no God, no soul, no immortality, no free will. A more delicious *non sequitur* was never offered to the world. You analyse a living organism to its ultimate. You cannot find the life. But the life was there, a something proven unsubstantial; and no proof can be advanced that it was a consequence of the organism, or that it cannot survive apart from it.

Sir Oliver Lodge advances one splendid speculation. He does not lay claim to it as his own. He simply says “it has been surmised.” Whether by himself or another, I do not remember to have encountered it elsewhere. The thought in itself is so fine, and it is expressed so finely, that I am impelled to depart from an almost invariable rule and permit myself to venture on a quotation of some length.

"We have granted that brain is the means whereby mind is made manifest on this material plane. It is the instrument through which alone we know it. But we have not granted that mind is limited to its material manifestation, nor can we maintain that without matter the things we call mind, intelligence, consciousness, have no sort of existence. Mind may be incorporate or incarnate in matter, but it may also transcend it. It has been surmised that just as the corpuscles and atoms of matter, in their intricate movements and relations, combine to form the brain cell of a human being, so the cosmic bodies, the planets and suns and other groupings of the ether, may perhaps combine to form something corresponding, as it were, to the brain cell of some transcendent mind. The thing is a mere guess ; it is not an impossibility, and it cannot be excluded from a philosophic system by any negative statement based on scientific fact. In some such sense as that, matter and mind may be, for all we know, eternally and necessarily connected ; they can be different aspects of some fundamental unity, and a lofty kind of Monism can be true, just as a lofty kind of Pantheism can be true ; but the miserable degraded Monism and lower Pantheism which limit the term 'god' to that part of existence of which we are now aware—sometimes indeed to a fraction only of that—which limit the term 'mind' to that of which we are ourselves conscious, and the term 'matter' to the dust of the earth and the other visible bodies, is a system of thought appropriate perhaps to a youthful and energetic portion of the nineteenth century, but not likely to survive as a system of perennial truth."

So speaks the true scientist who is sensible of the limitations which surround all physical research ; and his stern rebuke of "the miserable, degraded Monism" which has of late been allowed to trouble so many minds under the pretence that it presented the final conclusions of science will bring a sense of relief to crowds of earnest seekers.

The whole tendency of Sir Oliver Lodge's striking and valuable address leads to the sublime conception that what we think of as God may be the Soul of the Universe, bestowing upon it its own eternal life and animating its every manifestation of activity, just as the soul, the spirit, the anima of man, controls and vivifies every organ and every action of his body. It is not to attack what is true in the Monistic theory to assert the probable existence of a certain dualism. The soul and the body of a man combine to form his

personality, and there is an evident sense in which the single and the dual may merge in one. Professor Haeckel has arrived at an altogether lame and impotent conclusion. He cannot find the soul by a physical analysis, and he asserts dogmatically that it is, therefore, non-existent. He cannot by any analysis discover the principle of life, yet he knows that *that* exists. By his own showing it was incumbent upon him to declare that life is non-existent, and he falls, in spite of all his eloquence and all his learning, into a *reductio ad absurdum*. There is still left to humanity full room for the reasoned nurture of those hopes for a future life which have been proper to it from the beginning. In spite of all the materialists can bring against it, there remains a Faith for the Future, and the thoughtful mind turns naturally to speculations as to the character it is likely to assume. Accurate prophecy is obviously out of the question, but there are many signs which appear to point in one direction.

The other day the Dean of Westminster delivered an address at the Church House in connection with the Church Sunday School Institute. In the course of his speech he said that much which was accepted literally by our forefathers could not be accepted literally by us to-day. The first chapter of Genesis no longer means to us that the world was made in six days. The second chapter of Genesis no longer means to us that God moulded clay into a human figure and breathed upon it, or that He took a rib from Adam and made Eve. These and many other stories, like that of the talking serpent and the talking ass, we do not take now as literal statements of historical facts, but as imagery which clothes certain spiritual lessons. It is to be noticed that Dr. Armitage Robinson follows very closely after Canon Hensley Henson in

the proclamation of heterodoxy. Amongst the distinguished scholars of Nonconformity are many who have expressed similar opinions. An enormous sacrifice has already been made to scientific criticism, and it is impossible not to see that a greater has yet to come. The whole fable of Old Testament history will have to go where it cannot withstand the merciless exegesis which the scholars of the Church itself are bringing against it. The Church, in fact, is making it known that it will in future ask for no special sanction for the historic record presented to us in the Hebrew Scriptures. This is not, and never in any real sense was, an integral part of the Christian faith, though for many centuries its literal verity was staunchly insisted upon. That faith clusters around the central doctrines of Incarnation and Atonement, and so long as a Christian church exists at all it cannot recede from these essentials. The believer may let everything go which is not implicitly bound up with them, and may still retain all the substance of belief.

It may be predicted with confidence that the very constitution of the human mind will always preserve it from the canker of disbelief in things unseen, but it appears probable that dogma and the sanction of authority will relax their hold upon popular belief. The world will retain its belief in God, and its belief in the existence and the continuance of the soul. It has no proof to offer, in the sense in which a sum in arithmetic can be proved, but its intuitions point so strongly in that direction that in the absence of proof on the other side—which can never be established—they will continue to embrace a faith which is absolutely necessary to the happiness of the great mass of humanity. They will certainly think as they wish to think, and yet their thought is not merely as reason-

able as that of the minority, but it carries with it a far greater weight of probability. We are not able to cite our hopes and intuitions as an actual proof, but we may legitimately call upon them as an evidence, since they are almost universally a part of us, and there has never, within our knowledge, been an age in which they have not been active in their influence upon human thought and conduct. There is absolutely no evidence on the other side, and the world naturally turns from an idea which is at once repugnant and against probabilities. We may look, therefore, for the continuance of Faith to the end of time, but it is likely that it will become less and less dogmatic and increasingly nebulous in form. One thing appears to be absolutely certain. There will be, as history progresses, a completer acknowledgment of the Christian rule of life, whether the creed of Christianity be more or less widely accepted. The ideal of the Christian is increasingly the ideal of the worldling, whether he acknowledge it or no, and the weight of public opinion is entirely on the side of ethical Christianity. Its practicality may be denied, but no man doubts its righteousness, or disputes the fact that if it were universally followed it would be of advantage to the world. That which is everywhere accepted in theory must end in being translated into fact. The ideal will for ever transcend the practice, but we are already able to record an approach towards it, and that approach must necessarily become more intimate with the progress of the centuries.

The forms into which the Faith of the Future will cast itself are not to be foreseen, but there is barely room for doubt about two things. The human race will cling to the belief in God and the existence of the soul, and will regulate its morals more and more by

the loftiest code which has been given to man—the code pronounced in the immortal Sermon on the Mount.

### A CHURCH FOR AGNOSTICS.

THE line along which I have been trying to think for some time past leads me to the belief that if the sincere minds now moving and alive would only endeavour to dig down towards a common purpose they would find themselves meeting at the root of a common belief, and that the result of such an encounter would be made visible in an intellectual solidarity which might prove to be of incalculable service to the world. The one thing which stands immovably in the way of all honest thinking is the *parti pris*. There is nothing quite so truly hateful in the world—because there is nothing quite so truly harmful—as the assumption, on the one hand, that a finality of truth has been arrived at, and, on the other, that since a finality of truth is impossible of attainment the truth is not worth the seeking. All sorts and conditions of men—holding all sorts of opinions—are brow-beating the rest of the world with certainties, and no Pope was ever more cocksure than Mahomet, no follower of the Prophet ever more convinced than the pastor at Ebenezer, no neck-or-nothing disciple of Haeckel more reason-proof than the latest-converted cobbler who has found peace amongst the Glassites. It is so general and widespread a characteristic of mankind as to be practically universal that men cannot be at rest unless their beliefs are so arranged that they can be packed into a box and marked with a definite label of one recognised kind or another.

Nor is this tendency on the part of the individual

to attach himself to some more or less orthodox and accepted form of belief altogether without its reason and its uses. In all religious communities it affords a strong incentive to right conduct, and even where it breeds hypocrisy it extorts an outward respect for virtue which partly converts one of the most loathsome of private vices into a public good. And it may be said that any form of faith whatsoever which is so held that it induces a man to think devoutly and to act humanely is preferable to indifference or the negation of belief. The trouble begins where men, having accepted an opinion—oftener than not quite blindly and without any attempt to appraise its real value—take supercilious and offensive airs over the opinions of other people, thus dividing the world into jarring factions and bringing about a tremendous expenditure of fruitless effort. It is evident that if the energy expended in the attempt to proselytise were thrown into practical channels much work of real value might be accomplished. There is the curious instance of a Baptist mission to Rome, which, when one comes to think of it, is really almost incredibly insolent and narrow-minded, though it finds a parallel in any one of the hundred cases in which the faithful of one sect are striving to uproot the belief of the faithful of another.

I propose now to enter upon an examination of the three great religions of the world, to attempt to show where they meet at one common and all-important centre, and to suggest that there is something in each which might well be used to supplement the others. The theological assumption from which I start can be repugnant only to those who believe that one final and complete revelation has been made to mankind ; and whose appalling conviction it is that all human

souls to whom this special revelation has not been brought convincingly home are eternally lost. I have little reluctance to appear repellent to the holders of that creed, not merely because I believe them—as I do—to be a belated and dwindling handful, but because it has always seemed to me that they have done more harm to mankind by their insane vilification of the Godhead than ever was done by the whole army of unbelief. The theological assumption, then, is that the Divine purpose is not benignant here and malevolent there, with parochial prejudices in favour of chosen peoples—in Judea and Great Britain, for example—but a something so lofty and steadfast, so vast and unrelenting in the perfection of its justice as to be out of reach of everything but a faith which has no question—that if God be what our highest hopes can dream Him, He *cannot* be less God to the hungriest ryot, or the most fanatical pilgrim, Mecca-bound, than he is God to the sleekest of subscribers to Christian missions to the heathen. The assumption is—in a word—that God is the Maker of us all, and has an equal measure for us all, and—allowing to all of us such light as we can see by—cannot conceivably be angry because we have not looked for Him by a light He has withheld.

It has become a commonplace to allow that our loftiest conceptions of God must of necessity be dishonouring to Him, yet in all our religious systems we have somewhere dragged Him below the human level. Take the Christian creed itself, which includes, when rightly understood, the loftiest conception of which the human mind is capable, and see after what fashion it is translated to us, not only by the hundred and one theological schools of to-day, or by the Patriarchs of the early Church, but by the immediate

successors and inheritors of the Founder ! The very breath of its nostrils, the soul by which it lives, is its universality. Springing clean out of Judaism and the idea of a peculiar people, it takes the world of the Gentiles for its field. Rising under the heavy military yoke of Rome it declares a doctrine—not yet half understood—that the meek are blessed, for the astounding reason that they shall inherit the earth. It stands alone amongst the creeds in its proclamation of the Fatherhood of God—a relationship which necessarily indicates the responsibility of the God-head towards His offspring. Dogma apart, what are the fundamentals of Christianity ? That there is one God who is as a Father to us all ; that men, being brethren, owe goodwill to each other ; and that meekness and self-surrender are, in the ultimate, the all-conquering spiritual forces of the world.

And where is to be found a deficiency in a creed so splendid and at first sight so all-embracing ? There would have been none whatever—it might have stood satisfying and alone in its sublime simplicity—but that divers well-intentioned, half-inspired thinkers must needs incorporate with it—or, rather, thrust into it—great masses of the scoriæ of dead religions. The Divine Fatherhood, which is the very centre and essence of the Christian faith, is abandoned in favour of that arch-ideal of an unreasoning favouritism which was worshipped by the Jews. In the Christianity of Christ, God is the Father of us all. In the Christianity of the theologians He is the malevolent persecutor of nine-tenths of us, and, because of this astonishing inversion, it has become necessary to involve the creed in all manner of mysteries and confusions, merely to preserve our respect for a something which all men instinctively feel to have been brought below

the human standard. To the natural mind the unreal and distorted Deity of the theologians is abhorrent. To the native and uncorrupted mind Christ's presentation of Him is infinitely inviting. There is, in that conception, nothing to explain away, nothing to justify or to palliate, nothing to conceal in fog. We have presented to us the ideal of a Fatherhood, an image which any little child may understand and love.

More subtle and complex, and even more distorted by its commentators, is the creed which governs the minds of the greatest number of the human race, but at its centre stands the same Ideal as that set forth in the pure teaching of Christianity. The Deity of the Buddhist is further removed, and inhabits an austerer region of human thought. He is not merely the Source but the receptive End of all. The Universe is an emanation of his personality ; an exhalation, as it were, of the creative breath, which will in time obey an inhalation and be reabsorbed. It is supposed by the enlightened Buddhist that he has passed and has yet to pass through many stages of experience, in each one of which he approaches nearer and more near to the comprehension and the nature of the Creator, until at last he becomes one with his Original and "loses himself in light." To the Western mind this is cold and unsatisfying. Everything appears to have happened for nothing, and at the end of all it would seem as if the great Complexity need never have existed for any effect which can be imagined as the result of it.

But, as a philosophy, Buddhism has the advantage that it precludes the idea of waste or loss in any individual existence. That longing which is so well expressed in the pages of "In Memoriam"—that passion to believe "That not one life shall be destroy'd, Or cast

as rubbish to the void, When God hath made the pile complete," has no vexation for the soul of the Theosophist. The belief is a part of his creed, and he has just such a placid certainty in it as the Christian has in the Resurrection. Here again the essential things arrived at are the essential things in our own form of truth : that the Universe is an emanation of the Divine, and that the higher law of life is self-sacrifice. In one of his later incarnations the great Buddha offered himself as a sacrifice to a milkless tigress whose whelp was nourished by his blood. Here is a parable which carries the idea to an extreme, but it expresses a sense of the oneness of life, and of the duty of the higher to the lower in a singularly lofty and noble way. It seems to offer an imaginative splendid something even to the contemplative Christian, whose own creed, great and beautiful as it is, has not realised for him this amazing ultimate of mercy.

The main thing to be laid hold of is this. Before the theologians—who are everywhere the distorters and perverters of the original Word—have seized upon the ideals of these two great beliefs—we recognise them as meaning that God is the final good, and that towards Him all His sentient creatures must aspire. That the self-discrowned Prince would have loved the Son of the Carpenter, that the sublime enthusiast of Galilee would passionately have embraced the royal mendicant of India must remain a certainty for all men whose minds are not clouded by the microscopic misconceptions which lead us to believe that faith is inseparable from form. Perhaps it is even permissible to think that the royal soul which dreamed the Fatherhood of God and sent forth its message of peace and goodwill to all the world, and that other royal soul which descended from its earthly throne to

assume the beggar's robe and bowl were one and the same.

The least spiritual of the great beliefs which have practically divided the world in three is the Mahometan, but there, as elsewhere, is the thought of God and human brotherhood—everywhere the faith in a Something unthinkable higher than ourselves, a Something to which we owe fealty and adoration, a Something the very existence of which implies a duty of mercy and forbearance towards all created things. But in Mahometanism one seems to find a crystallisation at once of the eternal truth and the eternal falsehood. “There is one God and Mahomet is His prophet.” There is one God? Most true. And Mahomet is His prophet? Most partially true. Mahomet is one of His prophets, and one of a great multitude which no man can number. In the vital proclamation of the creed which governs a third of the world we have the combined thunders of all the Little Bethels, whether they be of faith or of science. “And Mahomet is His prophet.”

### INFIDEL MAKERS.

I confess to a modified liking for those old-fashioned swashbucklers of controversy who have assaulted me in such numbers. In the days of my nonage they had some power to put opinion into fetters. They and their like embittered the lives of millions who have since grown into God-fearing men and women, and for a time, at least, they drove whole shoals of young and ardent thinkers into blank infidelity. When it was a fight for bare life with these people—when one had to choose between the

abnegation of all faith and the acceptance of many demonstrable errors which made the acceptance of *their* faith impossible—it was difficult to look on them with equanimity. It was not merely that they were the implacable enemies of an honest effort to think justly. They are as implacable as ever, but they have lost the numbers and authority which made them formidable. Who is there amongst us who began to think seriously of the great Riddle of the Universe in the fifties, for example, who was not brow-beaten, hampered, and insulted by those well-meaning zealots whose direct descendants are now bombarding me with terms of infidel and blasphemer? Once the terms of opprobrium had power to awaken anger, and now—knowing how very wide of the mark they are—one sits and laughs indulgently. Lay on, belated brethren, and welcome. You alarm us no more; you anger us no more. We are at liberty to give you full credit for fidelity to an ideal, and we can admire your courage. But for politeness' sake—and even a Plenary Inspirationist can afford to be polite—it were best not to call names.

There is one marked trend in modern scientific thought, and it is in favour of a complete fearlessness in investigation and a complete unwillingness to offer a final judgment in respect to any question which has not gone through a process of exhaustive inquiry. The gentlemen who have inflicted verbal assault and battery upon me, have not mastered the earliest elements of the art of criticism. They are just as irrational as the people who call themselves Rationalists, who accept what they call “the mistakes of Moses” as affording conclusive proof of the non-existence of a guiding Power. They do not even see that, by their unreasoning adherence to ideas

and beliefs long since abandoned by the mass of thinking Christians, they afford standing-room for those who adopt this very attitude. An exhaustive system of Biblical exegesis may have put the earlier chroniclers out of court and may have abolished their claims to direct inspiration without touching for a moment the belief in an ordered and gradual progress of revelation. But if you say "This is the one and only revelation of the Truth, and there never was and never can be another," you put an opponent in a position to declare that it is manifestly and probably untrue in places, and is, therefore, not a revelation at all. An extraordinary desire to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds is characteristic of my opponents. By anybody who finds a pleasure in the exercise of the great art of reason a charm will be found in the following excerpt from my correspondence :

You throw doubts on the creation and the deluge. They were supernatural achievements. Look through a powerful telescope and you will count over 21,000 worlds and planets, with, perhaps, millions more behind them. Was it not possible for the Supreme Being to construct this football of ours in six days? . . . Tut, tut, man. You are only on the surface of the problem.

If this means anything at all, it means that the revelations of modern science confirm the narrative of Genesis, and that the Supreme Being, having already proved His power by the creation of innumerable worlds, may well be believed to have been able to create "this football" in six days. To begin with, the Mosaic narrative is not in accord with modern science; and, in the next place, the whole universe and not this football merely is clearly stated to have been fashioned within the time alleged. To come with questions as to whether it was not possible for the Supreme Being to do this or that in a given time

is just to babble nonsense. Who are we that we should undertake to measure possibilities? It is not our business to deal with speculations which it is clean outside our faculties to comprehend. But we do know very well that the universe took more than six days in the making, and we do know very well that the sun and the moon and "the stars also" are not stuck in a firmament which divides the waters on the earth from the waters over the earth. That it is God's universe I do most potently believe, and under God's guidance as well as of God's making, and proceeding ever in obedience to His law. But we have the process of creation going on under our eyes, and we are able to understand in some dim measure for how little and how much time counts. We know that the heavens are hoary with the records of unutterable ages. We know that our own sea-beds and mountain-tops have changed places. We know that the fossil inhabitants of our rocks were there millions of years before the Hebrew poet made his first guess at earth's genesis.

Some of my readers may think that in refuting a position which has already been a thousand times refuted I am beating the air, but there is an excellent reason why this oft-laid phantom should be laid again and yet again, and, if need be, yet again, until it affronts the daylight of our intelligence no more. These sticklers for the plenary inspiration of an old-world fairy-tale are the true fathers of infidelity. "The Bible," says my correspondent, "is the Word of God. If the Bible fails God fails with it." Among the thousands of people within whose hearing or to whose knowledge this statement is made every week of the year the greater number know little enough about Biblical criticism, but

they do know that amongst thinking people many statements which were once accepted as authentic are now (in that aspect) almost universally discredited, some of them being regarded as more or less approximate guesses, some of them as myths which are intended—Eastern fashion—half to conceal and half to reveal a truth, some of them as purely imaginative and poetic, and others yet as half legendary and half historic. They do not know these things student-fashion, but by a rough recognition of the general consensus of opinion, and under these conditions they are told point blank by zealous and ardent Christians that if the Bible is not flawlessly truthful from cover to cover, it fails and—God fails with it. What a chance is here afforded to the Cheap Jack of the Freethinking Press, who, being provided with “mistakes of Moses” by the basketful, finds himself authorised to follow in the wake of science whilst that authority “conducts God beyond her frontiers.” Poor Deity, depending for very existence on the historic accuracy of a poet’s dream ! If Moses errs, God fails ! What infant babblement is this ? Here on “this football,” as my assailant the “tut, tut, man” gentleman calls it—on this spray atom of the infinite ocean of the universe—before the birth of science, amongst a semi-barbarous and nomadic people, a man of fine intellect made a series of guesses, and because they are only approximate to truth God fails ! How fails ? In any rupture of the law which holds the rolling spheres in order, in any rupture of the law which governs alike Herschel and the electric unit charge, in any slackening of the forces which have ruled the universe since time began ?

But to deal candidly with the “tut, tut, man” gentleman, he does not mean quite what he says

or quite what he imagines himself to mean. The idea at the bottom of his mind amounts to no more than this : " If the plenary inspiration of the Mosaic story of the Creation can be doubted on reasonable grounds, then I shall have to readjust and modify my conceptions of the Deity, and that is a task to which I feel myself inadequate. An absolute fidelity to the *ipsissima verba* of Holy Writ is essential to my faith. If I fail in that fidelity my faith in God will fail." Well, that is rather pitiable, but it is intelligible in its way. But how far removed is it from the original blusterous assertion ! " The Bible is the prop and the sole prop of God " is one thing. " The Bible is the sole prop of my poor human faith " is another. The postulate once accepted that God *is*, it is the idlest kind of nonsense to pretend that He exists on the strength of any certificate whatever. No Deity genuine without the guarantee of Moses and the Prophets ! Surely this is too ludicrous. But let us for once speak without hesitancy an honest word on a theme which is worthy of honesty. The Hebrew Bible is ONE of the Words of God, and a right, good, great, and noble Word, which has nourished the souls of men from of old, and will nourish men's souls long after the world has ceased to dispute about it ; but the crank who claims that its every word and phrase is true is a far worse enemy to it than the facile idiot who imagines that a mistake of Moses is fatal to its whole philosophy.

I have recently declared that the Hebrew Scriptures were no longer generally accepted as affording an infallible historical record. Thereupon some venerable wiseacre writes to inform me in good set terms that I speak out of the belly of a darkened ignorance, inasmuch as divers and sundry baked

tiles have been excavated of late years in the East, and have by learned professors in great museums been deciphered, and that since the said baked tiles do most assuredly confirm certain historic details recorded in Scripture, therefore the whole of Hebrew history is made up of infallible truth. This reminds one of the classic person who carried a brick as a sample of the house he wished to sell. A man who encounters a whole thesis with a solitary instance is not a person with whom it is possible to argue with profit—to himself. The baked tiles are extremely interesting and they do establish or confirm certain historical facts which were never in serious dispute, but in saying that Biblical history is no longer considered infallible by Biblical students one is not advancing the foolish theory that none of it is true. The unfortunate who has made up his mind to be just to both the extremists, and, if possible, to reconcile them, is an incredulous infidel to the one and a credulous ass to the other.

In the loneliness of a sick room I have been able to punctuate the taking of the nastiest kind of doctor's stuff by a renewal of the study of Genesis, and the tale of the Tower of Babel affords me a most excellent example of the kind of thing I have in mind. If this is not legend pure and simple there is no credence to be placed in evidence. A very considerable part of what was then the population of the world are met upon the plain of Shinar. They resolve amongst themselves to defeat any future project of the Deity to drown the race of man. To that end they decide to build a tower of such dimensions that it shall shelter all of them, and of such height especially that it shall outrival the loftiest mountains of the earth.

To such a height at least it must evidently be both watertight and waterproof. We will imagine, if you like, that the Babel builders knew of nothing loftier than Mount Ararat, and that they did not count on more than a mile or thereabouts of actual waterproof work ; but the queer part of the thing is either that the Deity is equally ignorant or that the builders must have planned an edifice much higher than Mount Everest. Anyhow, the Supreme Being feels the necessity of guarding Himself against these audacities. "And the Lord," so it is recorded, "came down to see the city and the tower. . . . And the Lord said . . . this they begin to do : and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

That some poet dreamed all this and made a story out of it is a simple thing enough to fancy, but it paralyses the mind to imagine that the whole human race ever believed that "with brick for stone and slime for mortar" they could build a permanent refuge from a renewal of the Noachian deluge. And the Lord coming down to look at the trumpery device and getting anxious about it and devising a special and quite unnecessary means for its frustration ! Legend ? Of course. History ? Of course *not*. There can be, there is, no dispute in the minds of reasonable men. But Rationalistic Cheap Jack on the one side indexes it under his eternal heading of "Mistakes of Moses" and believes himself to establish from it the worthlessness of a great spiritual faith with which it is not at all concerned, and the Plenary Inspirationist stamps this folly with his own imprimatur.

## TOLSTOY'S SPURIOUS CHRISTIANITY.

I purpose now to consider Count Tolstoy's proposals for the abolition of all the means on which the world relies for its protection against the predatory classes. It has been hailed as a true return to the principles of primitive Christianity ; and it will be my object to show that it is nothing of the kind, but in plain fact a mad and mischievous perversion of those principles. I do not care to argue that if Tolstoy's position were accepted and acted on Society would fall into instant chaos. That is quite evident, but it is apart from the present question—which is simply whether the theory affords a just representation of the doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount, on which it pretends to found itself. It is not at all to the point to invoke the authority of the early fathers ; as, for instance, the belief of Tertullian that no Christian could hold the office of magistrate and administer imprisonment, or that of Ambrose, who held it forbidden to defend oneself against a murderous assault. The appeal is to the Sermon on the Mount. Let us accept the challenge on the ground on which it is offered.

To be quite sure that Tolstoy is not being misrepresented, it will be well to have his words before us. He has a perfectly competent knowledge of our language, and he has written to the lady who has provided his works with their English dress : " Your translations are very good, and I do not wish for better ones." In quoting from Mrs. Louise Maude's version we are, therefore, safe. " There are none," he writes, " who are not themselves guilty, and therefore none

who can punish or reform." . . . "The usual objection—' What is one to do with the evil-doers ?—surely not let them go unpunished ? ' no longer confused him. . . . Since it is evident that it is not in the power of some to reform others, the only reasonable thing is to cease doing what is not only useless, but harmful, immoral, and cruel." . . . " Those lawful criminals—judges, procureurs, magistrates, and gaolers—who judge and punish men." I notice that the *Morning Leader*, commenting on all this, observes that " Tolstoy is clearly the one great Christian teacher who is left to us." I shall try to show that the doctrines here enunciated are not Christian at all, or even to be associated with Christianity from afar off, except by a disordered mind.

Tolstoy's meaning is plain enough. It is that any attempt to establish a Court of Justice—whether civil or criminal—is in itself a thing forbidden, and *per se* a crime against humanity, however, or with whatever end in view, its proceedings may be conducted. He translates " Judge not that ye be not judged " with literal fidelity. He assumes that because all men are, from the orthodox point of view, fallen from Grace by nature, no man has a right to control vice or to resist it in its assault upon himself or upon another. He implies, as if there were no doubt about the matter, that evil-doers of whatever kind ought to be allowed to go unpunished, and that judges and magistrates who punish men are sinners against God and against Society. He imputes this amazing farrago of ideas to certain specific texts and to the four Evangelists in general, and there are people to be found who have studied to so little advantage as to accept him as an exponent of Christian ethics. The greater part of the book now under examination

is devoted to the exposure of the corruptions, cruelties, and hygienic and moral abuses which have made the name of Russian Justice a byword amongst Western nations, and we can see that it is really on the strength of these abominable excrescences that he denounces Justice itself.

The doctrine of Christianity is nowhere seen to impeach the collective administration of justice. The thing against which the great Founder set His face was an individual reprisal for an injury sustained. There the prohibition is absolute and unfaltering. You shall not take the law into your own hands : but I do not find a line in the Gospels which can by any ingenuity be twisted into a denunciation of organised justice, where it is intended to work in the direction of restraint or reform. You shall do good unto them who despitefully use you. The body politic is despitefully used by the dangerous street inebriate. The body politic does good unto him when it takes strong hold of him and prevents him by legal means from obtaining the poison which is destroying him. It owes a double duty of mercy—a duty of mercy to the manifold public who are scandalised or debased by the open exhibition of vice, and a duty of mercy to the hapless wretch himself whom its intervention may save from lifelong degradation. I acknowledge that I am taking my simplest and easiest instance here ; but I do so because I am pleading that there may be, and are, cases in which you may display the truest kindness by a method which has in it, at least, the one penal element of restraint, and that you cannot manifest this active solicitude for a suffering fellow-creature without having called into existence some such judicial person or body of persons as Tolstoy would describe as anti-Christian.

No Christian man defends the prison horrors, the Siberian barbarities which Tolstoy labours to denounce ; but they are not an essential concomitant of human justice. They are the flat opposites of justice, and their existence is no argument against a sane and temperate control of those who are really dangerous to the peace of the commonweal. The Evangelists, which are supposed to be responsible for the ideals of " Resurrection," are, in essence and from first to last, a pronouncement of the fact that it is the will of God to deal with mankind on a principle of punishment and reward. To do the will of the Father is to reap a rich inheritance. To refuse or ignore that will is to incur the most awful pains and penalties. This is expressly stated to be the way of God, and by the gospel of Tolstoy we are forbidden to walk in it, because one foolish enthusiast takes a feebly sentimental view of a few isolated texts which do not bear upon the case. We are exhorted to do justice and love mercy, but we are not exhorted to leave justice undone. What is explicitly laid upon us is that we should offer no personal reprisal, that we should act neither from hate nor anger, that we should not seek revenge or cherish animosities. A portion of the crazy case for the abolition of justice is, of course, based on the words, " I say unto you, That ye resist not evil " ; but it is monstrous on the face of it to argue that the Teacher who scourged the money-changers from the Temple and from whose lips broke the tremendous outburst against the Scribes and Pharisees meant these words to signify more than is conveyed in the immediate context : " but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn unto him the other also." Christ's own words and conduct are the only possible commentary on this passage.

It implies a *personal* passive non-resistance, and in the immortal discourse in which it appears it is prefaced by this passage, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him ; lest at any time the adversary <sup>be</sup> deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison." There is no reproof of human justice here, and in the words which follow there is a stern approval of it. "Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou has paid the uttermost farthing."

The doctrine of personal passivity in the face of injury and insult is Christian doctrine, and it is already hard for unregenerate man ; but only a maudlin sentimentality can torture it into meaning that it is sinful to take precautions for the good order of the State. It is not the duty of Christian men to abolish the machinery of justice or to pull down its prisons. It is their duty—a duty they owe in common with all lovers of their kind—to make our prisons as useful as they can be made, to make them homes of honest labour, places in which the inmates shall learn something of the arts of life and shall as far as possible be wooed back—or forward—to self-respect and honour. Our Russian Reformer declares through his hero, with whom it is quite fair to say that he identifies himself, that "the penitentiary system cannot be improved," and that it has increased the number of so-called criminals. The first part of the statement is arrant nonsense, but there is more than a taste of truth in the second, so far as it applies to Russia, where men are hourly imprisoned for holding political opinions of a very harmless kind.

In England we have a riper conception of the ranks

from which the criminal classes are drawn. We have arrived at it with no conspicuous haste, perhaps, but we do not any longer penalise opinion in respect to politics and religion, and—if in that respect alone—we have proved that a bad penitentiary system can be amended. We are learning every day better and better to understand the social duties. We are on the way to a penal system which will be purely repressive and educational. We are not in search of a Thieves' Phalanstery, but we are in search of a Thieves' Reformatory. Our prison system, under which it is possible for a man to spend years without learning a craft by which he can make a living, is in many respects foolish. We have little idea yet of the qualifications for which prison governors, doctors, chaplains, and warders should be chosen. Our prisons are understaffed in the higher official grades, and in the lower the standard of education and intelligence is ridiculously low. There should be a missionary staff of earnest, devoted, experienced men in every one of our large prisons, and an educational staff for all sorts of crafts and trades not less earnest, devoted, and experienced. Every prison should be a humming hive of industry.

Every inmate, according to his physical faculty, should be drilled in valuable and sterling gymnastic exercises. He should be hustled to some intelligent work daily, and kept at work six days a week. As a result of industry and good conduct he should be rewarded with some communion with his kind, under the strictest supervision. A gaol should be a school and not a place of dull stagnation. But what can you do with a Church of England chaplain and a Roman Catholic chaplain and one or two amateur Nonconformist parsons only amongst twelve hundred

prisoners? Or what with a governor, a deputy governor, a couple of doctors, and a schoolmaster to complete the staff of educated men? The fact, as it stands, is that a gaol is a place to be run on the cheap, and we send our prisoners to fester in solitude because we will not pay for a proper and wholesome discipline. You can't make a good citizen out of a bad one by stuffing him into a hole and preaching a tepid little sermon at him once a week; and teaching him to stitch slop clothes or make mats or labour like a draught horse in the quarries. The firm hand always, but never the brutal and insolent voice. Discipline, discipline, discipline everywhere, but never the soul-rotting solitude which is our device for saving trouble and for mistakenly economising the payment of salaries to efficient men. Compel your criminal to work, but let it be at something he can carry into free life without proclaiming himself a gaol-bird. Teach him to feel an honest pride in his own skill and industry. Turn your penal coffin into a man-factory. Your subject will be jolly glad to get out of it if you treat him as he ought to be treated, and glad to keep away; but, at least, you will have tried to make a man and a working asset of him, instead of having lazed about him in your present mindless, worthless, and cheeseparing fashion.

**SOCIAL**



## ETHICS OF POVERTY.

SOME little time ago a publishing syndicate suggested to Mr. Keir Hardie that he should write an article on the question—"Can a Man be a Christian on a Pound a Week?" Mr. Hardie consented. The article was written, made its appearance in many newspapers in various parts of the country, excited a good deal of criticism and comment, and is now reissued in a slightly revised form from the offices of the International Labour Party. The study of Socialism and Christianity in combination is no new thing, but in the little penny pamphlet which now lies on my writing-table Mr. Keir Hardie asks one question and answers another. After a merely formal exordium he begins by saying, "Let us define the terms we are using." The man he has in his mind is a fully-matured human being, made in the image of God, who takes an intelligent interest in his own affairs and in the affairs of the State of which he is a citizen. He works for an employer in some centre of industry at some not very skilled form of employment. He has a wife and, say, three children, and an income of twenty shillings a week with which to provide himself and them with shelter, warmth, food, clothing, medical attendance, and holidays. The question posed is whether such a man living in such conditions can be a Christian. Before it can be answered we must follow Mr. Hardie's lead and define

the terms we are using. What is a Christian ? He is one who believes in the Fatherhood of God, and in the Divinity of Christ, and whose constant effort it is to live in kindly harmony with all men, and to dispense mercy so far as in him lies. The cup of cold water will serve if he can go no further. The will to succour will serve if even the cup of cold water be not forthcoming.

The question really is, then : Can such a man as Mr. Keir Hardie describes be such a man as I describe, and the answer is so evidently and immediately in the affirmative that it is a little surprising to find any thoughtful person posing it in that form. A man can believe in Christ, and can have a heart for mercy and justice, whether his income be twenty shillings a week, or twenty pence, or twenty pounds. The money question and the question of faith and ethical intention do not touch each other. But, having presented the question to his own mind in this fashion, Mr. Hardie has no alternative but to slide away from it, though for form's sake he professes to find an answer in a very definite "No." But the query which is at the bottom of Mr. Keir Hardie's mind is a very real and very forcible question indeed. It is : Has such a man as he describes a fair and reasonable chance of being a Christian ? And here his definite and confident "No" strikes an answering chord in the mind and conscience. That chord derives an added emphasis from the fact that the existence of Mr. Hardie's typical worker implies the prior existence of great masses who have already lived under like conditions, and of masses more to follow him ; every individual member of which has led, and has been forced to lead, a life of soul-starvation ; a life in which the mental provender provided has been

more efficient for the right nurture of the mind than the stunted physical provision has been for a right physical development.

This is not a matter which needs to be argued. Mr. Hardie can point with a pathetic triumph to the slums of all our great cities, and to the crowded quarters in which the poorly-skilled worker has his abiding-place. He can point to a thousand regions in which the mother's scanty milk is seasoned to her babe with blows and curses ; where the thinking is even poorer than the diet ; where an unintelligent selfishness is so prevalent on all hands that it becomes an act of almost unconquerable difficulty to rise superior to it. There is no doubt about it ; the social mill in which these people live does grind body and soul. The moral atmosphere which surrounds them is not one to attune the lungs to the air of Christian thought. Can a man be a Christian under such conditions ? Yes. Is he likely to be a Christian under such conditions ? No. One need not take the forlornest type into consideration here—the lapsed mass, or the lost soul, to use the words Mr. Hardie has adopted from the social missionaries. We look at the slightly skilled worker he has himself selected —the man who takes an intelligent interest in himself and in the State of which he is a citizen. Even *his* mental atmosphere is mephitic, and those who most desire to serve him are as often as not employed in pumping poison into it in their well-meant efforts to supply him with fresh air.

Mr. Hardie argues that with a pound a week a man might be comfortable if it brought its full value for himself and his dependents. "But out of the poor pittance he has to contribute towards the maintenance of a whole host of more or less useless persons and

institutions." He goes on to speak of a great multitude which no man can number—a rather futile flourish of rhetoric, by the way, since a reference to the census papers will give him all the information he desires—as being sustained, "some in affluence, some in comfort," who themselves produce nothing, and have to be paid by those who produce something. Later he discourses of the Army and Navy, the police force, and the law courts—"all of them anti-Christian institutions." Now, Mr. Hardie himself has the argument in hand, and those whom he is instructing have a right to ask him how much of the cost of the maintenance of those anti-Christian forces, the police and the law courts, comes out of the pittance of the worker. If the rich paid all the taxes wholly and directly out of their own pockets the workman's wife would save a few pence in her weekly marketing—and a few pence are, of course, a large economy in such a case as hers—but she would save no more.

But Mr. Hardie goes on to enumerate the landed aristocracy, the plutocracy, the Stock Exchange gambler, the bookmaker of the racecourse, the publican, the loafer, the lawyer, the pickpocket, the domestic servant, the footman—amongst the great multitude whom no man can number. There are only two of the classes indicated—and not one solitary member of any one of the others—who take one farthing from the poor pittance of the working-man. The landowner, aristocratic or otherwise, exacts his rent, and the pickpocket may take his toll; but the Stock Exchange gambler takes nothing from the "poor pittance"—which is poor enough, God knows!—nor does the bookmaker, nor the publican, except at the man's own will; nor does the plutocrat, nor the loafer, nor the lawyer, nor the footman, nor the

domestic servant. All these people may be undesirable—are evidently equally undesirable in Mr. Hardie's eyes—and their existence may be inimical to the interests of the worker; but Mr. Hardie is talking of what has to come out of the worker's weekly pound, and he wanders away into a measureless slough of No-Meaning when he pretends that the people he enumerates take away from it anything whatever.

The little pamphlet is pitifully incoherent, and yet it is eloquent in its own way. Demos has his grievances, and they are terribly real. He sees the well-to-do idler taking his hansom to the theatre, and walking into an expensive restaurant to supper after the play, and he knows that what would have maintained him and his for a week has been expended on the pleasure of one man in the hours of luxury which follow a luxurious dinner. He sleeps, crammed with distressful bread, and rises to handle pack and bale and pick and shovel, whilst dainty idleness is still abed, or, maybe, is driving home from some revel of gaiety. Who can wonder if he complains, and if his thoughts about the inequalities of life are bitter? He feels, and justly feels, that the world deals with him harshly, and that it must be possible to do something for the amelioration of his lot. The mischief is that he proposes to himself schemes which are and must remain impracticable because they are in violent opposition to the instincts of human nature. A friendly reader who is on the Socialist side tells me that the world is not yet noble enough to enter into accord with his ideals. It is not the nobility of the scheme which makes it repugnant to the general sense of the community. It is the root injustice on which it is founded—the claim that incompetence, improvidence, shiftlessness, and idleness shall have

an equal share of the world's goods with skill, thrift and industry. It can never be so, nor is it desirable that the natural incentives to public and private usefulness should be removed. The national income approaches two thousand millions per annum. Of the aggregate sum Mr. Keir Hardie informs us that the "usefully-employed wage-earner" receives a little over one-third, and that he is therefore robbed of two-thirds of the result of his labour. But, as we have seen already, Mr. Hardie's theories as to the usefully-employed wage-earner would exclude the Army, the Navy, the police, the executive staff of Justice, and all legal practitioners. I have no means of knowing whether he includes the sums paid to high-priced tenors and sopranos, to the painters of pictures, to richly-remunerated medical men who receive special fees as a reward for special skill and service, or to novelists, dramatists, poets, writers of scientific books, and others of their tribe. There is no more doubt that a great many of us are overpaid than there is that a great many of us struggle very hard and fail to make both ends meet, and there is no doubt at all that on the whole we do a useful and, indeed, a necessary part of the world's work.

The idea that we shall have attained to the kingdom of Heaven when the man of genius and the street scavenger lie down in State-owned houses of the same pattern and dine in State-provided restaurants, served from the same fare, and all men shall be content with that arrangement, has its inviting side for some orders of mind. But to others—of whom I confess myself one—the kingdom of Heaven will be a great deal nearer when we have eliminated from our midst the drones of all ranks and orders, the poor drones as well as the rich drones, and all men shall contribute to the

common stock of energy. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done, and the Socialists will have their share in it. They will help to check the growth of unearned increment, for one thing, a very large proportion of which might with perfect justice be transferred to the coffers of the State. They will help towards the creation of a graduated income-tax. There is no rational ground on which a man with an income of five thousand a year could object to being taxed at a higher rate than a man with an income of a thousand. There is no rational ground why a man with a million a year should not be taxed at a rate still higher, and very considerably higher. There is an enormous amount of surplus wealth which might justly be used to relieve the pressure which rests upon all the struggling classes—not the usefully-employed wage-earners of Mr. Keir Hardie alone, who have, after all is said and done, no exclusive right to all the blessings of the millennium—but the great bodies of heavily-laden professional men who are just as necessary to the harmonious working of the world as the men with labour-hardened hands.

Mr. Hardie complains with justice of the exorbitant rental which his typical worker is compelled to pay out of his inadequate stipend of one pound a week. That is another matter in respect to which the Socialist will help us, in a perfectly rational manner, and without depriving any man of what can reasonably be regarded as a right. There are many ways in which the worker is oppressed, and there are many ways of moving to his succour, but a refusal to recognise rights which have been acknowledged from time immemorial is not one of them; partly because the extremists who advocate such a measure will have had their most potent weapon taken from their hands by the action

of reformers less violent and more rational than themselves ; and partly because, in the long ages which must be between them and their purpose, a more general knowledge of the means by which the interplay of capital and labour may be made advantageous all round will have been arrived at. The power of the Socialist over the working-class lies largely in the fact that vast numbers of them are hopelessly and pitilessly exploited by property owners in great towns. That is a matter the remedy of which might be at once arranged by an enactment the effect of which should be spread over a fair area of time, and Mr. Hardie might well test the sincerity of that Party to which he has hitherto lent his support by the introduction of such a measure in the course of an early Parliamentary Session.

### OUR STARVING WORKERS AND THE CAUSES OF DISTRESS.\*

IT is increasingly evident year by year that there is something wrong in the economic condition of this country. The one salient fact which obtrudes itself upon us all is that in the midst of great luxury, and in the face of figures which are quoted triumphantly to show that the trade of Great Britain was never more prosperous than at this hour, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children are in daily need of the barest necessities of life, and are only kept from literal death by starvation through private and organised benevolences of one kind or another. We do not alter this fact by pointing to the Board of Trade Returns, or to all the evidences of comfort

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\* Written in 1905.

which are afforded by our miles on miles of suburban villas. We have evidences of prosperity in plenty, but, for a variety of reasons, there is a large body of people who do not share in it, except in the sense in which Lazarus might have shared with Dives if, when "desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table," his wish had been occasionally gratified. If there were a perfectly impartial Somebody whose business it was to carve the general loaf in equal slices, there would be enough to go round; but there is no such Somebody, and in all human probability there never will be. In default there is nothing for us but to give a frank and full acknowledgement of the magnitude of the evil—to ascertain as nearly as possible the causes which lie at the root of it—and then to cast about in all seriousness for the means by which those causes may be most effectually dealt with.

Our innumerable organisations for the relief of poverty by giving are only palliative. Charity is no cure for chronic poverty. At its best it does but skin and film the ulcerous places in the body politic, and there is the gravest and most real danger that even whilst it affords a momentary relief it may help to make the disorder permanent. It would be a cruel thing—so cruel a thing that no man dare advocate it—to arrest the course of public charity for a single week. We dare not allow our myriad-headed patient to awake to a full consciousness of his own agonies. But it is worth while to do it in imagination, and to ask ourselves what sort of a picture this England of ours would present if those who are helpless amongst us were left to their own helplessness. We should not sleep for the cries of hungry children. We should cast aside public order for public panic, and frenzied mobs

would invade our markets and our granaries, and would tear the means of sustenance from our hands. Nothing of this kind will happen, but it will only fail to happen because we contrive this, that, and the other expedient for warding off the wild beast Despair from many hundreds of thousands of the destitute. In a land where one great political party declares through hundreds of newspapers and on hundreds of platforms every day that trade and commerce are so thriving that it is a manifest absurdity to speak of any necessity for safeguarding or increasing them, this is, to say the least, a remarkable state of things.

The very first essential to a reform of any kind is that the need for it should be acknowledged. Some people find a mighty comfort in the reflection that the distress is "sporadic." Others tell you it is exaggerated. Suppose it to be "sporadic" and allow it to be exaggerated. Is it *there*? Assume that somebody brings along an estimate to the effect that if all State and private aid were withdrawn from the necessitous among our population we should have to bury two millions of our people within the next three weeks. So sure as you are alive, some Gradgrind will arise to tell him that he lies by a hundred thousand or by a quarter of a million, and to assure the public that no person who can deliberately falsify figures is worthy of a moment's confidence. And your political Podsnap will put the question behind him, sir, and refuse to contemplate the question, sir, whilst it is complicated by such wild and unprincipled and wholesale falsehood.

It is always wisest not to exaggerate, but exaggeration in a case like this is a venial sin in comparison with the callous-hearted lie which pooh-poohs the calls of human misery, and would make it seem that the whole claim of the destitute is a got-up business in the interests

of a politician. I am not going to exaggerate. I am going to state a simple fact and to put it in moderate terms. There are great numbers of people—not paupers, not wastrels, nor workshys—in almost all our larger towns and cities, between whom and death by famine there is absolutely nothing but the charity of their fellow-men. I decline to make a guess at figures, but—men, women, and children all told—they do certainly number many, many scores of thousands. What are the causes of this lamentable condition of affairs?

One of them lies beyond doubt in the swamping of the towns by immigrants from the rural districts. Large bodies of these people are drawn by the temporary employment offered by municipalities. Many of them move away in search of fresh temporary employment, but more remain to swell the ranks of the needy surplus. Those who are familiar with rural England and its Cimmerian darkness after winter sun-down will not need to learn that the mere illumination of our city streets is in itself a tremendous attraction to rustic folk who have once grown accustomed to it. Crowds of them might even yet find employment on the land, but they are unwilling to return to conditions of life which have been made distasteful by experience. The characters of many are hopelessly sapped by the plenitude of eleemosynary relief, and they sink into a discontented dependence upon charity.

Then, of course, alien immigration plays its part. It has not yet assumed the proportions with which some of its opponents discredit it, and there are some things to be said in its favour which are commonly overlooked. Its true evils are not to be found in the mere influx of a foreign element, but in the fact that

the influx is not properly sifted, and that we are admitting a horde of people who are "undesirable" in all senses of the word. It is absurd to suppose that we can continue to travel on the lines on which we are now going without bringing about a very considerable social disaster. We suffer seriously already, and our plight is being aggravated every day. England will have to take a leaf out of America's book, and we shall have to establish an Ellis Island of our own.

More serious than this last question has yet grown to be is the attitude of the Trade Unions towards Labour. By their limitation of output, by their determination to level downwards to a mediocrity rather than to level upwards towards efficiency, and by their opposition to the old system of apprenticeship they have induced a steady deterioration in the quality of British workmanship, and have given opportunities to the competing foreigner of which he avails himself more and more. So far as the voice of the Labour leaders has yet been heard in the discussion on Fiscal Reform, their verdict in respect to it has been adverse. Their decision amounts to this. They will neither allow their men to protect themselves against foreign rivalry by their own efficiency, their own superior industry and skill, nor will they permit them to accept an aid which is offered to them from outside. If a proper standard of employment is to be secured—it would be idle to talk of such a standard being maintained in a country in which thousands are permanently out of work—if such a standard is to be secured, the Trade Unions will have to adopt another policy than that which they have hitherto pursued. They will have to remove the manacles they have imposed upon the pick of the workmen under their control, and will have to reconsider their

demand that a first-rate workman and a second-rate and a third-rate shall enjoy an equal wage.

More serious yet is the constant decrease in the value of the work the British workman is able to sell to the outside world and the constant increase in the value of the work the foreign workman sells in Great Britain. Our exports of "manufactured or mainly manufactured" British goods were six millions less in 1903 than they were in 1899. Our purchases of goods of the same character—"manufactured or mainly manufactured"—from the foreign workman in the same period were twelve millions more. Now an item of this sort may easily be lost sight of in a general survey of the Board of Trade Returns, but is of the most vital importance. The British workman does less and less for the world outside, and has less and less to draw in wages in consequence. The world outside at the same time does more and more of his work, and again leaves him less and less to draw in wages as a consequence. So he suffers in both ways—by his own actual falling-off in output and by the growing intrusion of foreign manufactures. In iron and steel and "manufactures thereof," the foreign workman sold us three millions' worth more in 1903 than he did in 1899, and the world bought two millions less from us. We sold in new ships nearly nine millions' worth in the earlier year and less than three and a half millions' worth in the later. In new ships, be it observed—not by the transfer of any working vessels. In 1903 the workshops of the world supplied us with more than one hundred and twenty millions' worth of manufactured or mainly manufactured goods, and the British workman is asked to believe that there is just as much work left for him to do as if no article of foreign make were introduced into this country.

A most amazingly inept and misleading book has just been given to the world. A Cohort of Ancients who remembers the "hungry forties" has been encouraged to publish its reminiscences, and we get a gruesome series of pictures of the sufferings of those hard old times. Nobody denies the suffering, but everybody knows that it resulted from many causes. The utter break-up of home industry, the sudden overcrowding of the people in the new centres of manufacture which were unready for them ; the system of infant slavery ; the existence of the "tommy shops" ; the shameless rapacity of the manufacturers ; the Muscovitish tyranny which put down by the sword all attempts at the organisation of labour ; the exhaustion of the country as a result of the Napoleonic wars ; the prolonged partial abandonment of agriculture in the fields of Europe ; the appalling weight of a taxation which enforced an impost on the very light of Heaven—these find the student of history reason enough for the distresses of the "hungry forties." The theory that those distresses were caused by dear bread alone is the most fantastic and baseless in the world. As a matter of mere historic fact, wheat under Protection fell seventy shillings a quarter in the thirty years which preceded the passing of Cobden's Bill, and it began to grow dearer instead of growing cheaper after the Repeal of the Corn Laws. The very men of Manchester whose money and influence brought about the Repeal were a thousandfold more responsible for the wretchedness of the masses than was the price of bread. Their looms were roaring night and day, and gold poured into their coffers, whilst they illustrated their own maxim that the worth of a thing is what it will fetch by paying overcrowded adult male labour at a rate of less than six shillings a week.

## THE SOCIAL SPHINX.

In the eighteen-forties people starved in cellars, which were sometimes flooded with sewer-water. Unpaid infant slaves, called "apprentices," kept masses of willing workmen unemployed. Employers of labour forced their workmen to buy at the "tommy shops," at which they sold execrably bad food at inordinate prices. Any agitation for the betterment of the workmen's wages was a crime at law. Setting aside these things, and others like them—which have no more relation to any question of Fiscal policy than to the precession of the equinoxes—there would be just as much misery in England now as there ever was if it were not for the unsleeping benevolence of the great-hearted British public. It warms the heart to think of it, but it chills the heart to recognise the need for it—for it and for so much more.

Whatever else Free Trade has done for this country, it has not abolished hunger, and it has not furnished full employment for the working-classes. It is just as futile to hope that any scheme of Fiscal Reform alone will cure all our troubles now as it is to declare that our old Fiscal policy was the sole or even the chief cause of our troubles of sixty years ago. We have got four things to do. We have to decentralise our population, to control the immigration of aliens, to remove the shackles with which the Trade Unions have loaded Labour, and—whether by one means or by another—to put ourselves on an equal ground with our foreign competitors in manufacture.

## THE SOCIAL SPHINX.

IN an issue of the *Fortnightly Review* at the end of 1906 Mr. Montague Crackanthorpe, in an article

entitled, "Population and Progress," dealt with a question of the first importance to civilised mankind at large. In the Presidential Message then recently presented to Congress, Mr. Roosevelt made an emphatic declaration in respect to the same issue. The two writers have a solitary point of contact, but elsewhere they are as wide asunder as the poles. Mr. Crackanthorpe laments the evils which attend an indiscriminate and unguarded multiplication of the human race. Mr. Roosevelt points with dismay to the fact that in certain communities and regions in the United States the birth-rate has fallen below the death-rate. Mr. Crackanthorpe regards the doctrines of the Eugenic school as a means towards Race Regeneration. Mr. Roosevelt would appear to repudiate them root and branch, and to look on them as a step of portentous length towards Race Suicide. But Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Crackanthorpe unite in the condemnation of that hyper-egoism which leads people who are alike physically, mentally, and by their social conditions fitted to enrich the race to refuse the natural responsibilities of married life lest their pleasures and dissipations should be inconveniently curtailed thereby.

The Eugenic doctrine is one of Race Culture, and its aim is to secure an increase in the numbers of those who are best fitted for the struggle of life and a decrease in the numbers of those who are least fitted for the struggle. It deprecates the limitation of the families of the healthy and well-to-do, whilst it would urge such a limitation in the cases of the sickly and the poor. Mr. Crackanthorpe crystallises its contention in one remarkable sentence, "It is as important that the right people should be born as that the wrong people should not be born," and he ex-

presses the opinion that a general apprehension of this truth would be worth a dozen *Dreadnoughts* and a legion of Lee-Enfields. The writer has taken prodigious pains with his subject, and he has surveyed it with a fine impartiality from every aspect but one. It happens, unfortunately, however, that the solitary aspect he has neglected is the most important of all. If the doctrine he advocates is to be admitted, it is—to parody his own phrase—as important that the right people should put it in practice as that the wrong people should not. And it is evident, further, that the right people—who, in this case, are the scrofulous, the rickety, epileptic, phthisical, inebriate, imbecile, and semi-imbecile—are just the last people in the world who may be expected to adopt it, while all the intelligent egotists of the world will seize with gladness on an idea which limits their responsibilities.

The greater number of the distinguished thinkers who have written on this theme are on the side of Mr. Crackanthorpe, but it is curious to remark that no one of them has given himself the pains to confront the vital objection which I have just urged. Poor old Malthus, with whose name the doctrine is most commonly associated in England, never preached it. His method is very fairly expressed by the essayist of the *Fortnightly* in the phrase, “Do not marry until you have a fair prospect of supporting a family.” Apart from his facts and figures, and his general exhortations to morality and temperance, this sentence may be said to embody the whole of Malthus’s book, and the good old eighteenth-century divine would turn in his grave if he could but know the systems and ideas with which his name has been ignorantly associated. Mr. Crackanthorpe cites, in addition to Malthus, Dr. Chalmers, John Stuart Mill,

Matthew Arnold, and Professor Huxley. He takes them in the order named, and it is only just to his argument to admit that each of the authorities cited expresses at once a later and a more emphatic opinion on his side. No better proof could be afforded of the fact that since its original inception the idea has grown with great rapidity. But the mischief is that it has grown in the wrong places.

There are two tables given in the article now before me which establish this fact beyond the shadow of a doubt. From one it appears that in the years 1881-1903 the birth-rate in England and Wales underwent a decrease of seventeen per cent., whilst the children born in "very poor quarters" in London stood to the children born in rich quarters in the ratio of one hundred and forty-seven to eighty-seven. Now, Herbert Spencer advanced a theory which in his view partly accounted for this fact, though it certainly cannot be held to embrace the whole of it. It is that "organisms multiply in inverse ratio to the dignity and worth of the individual life." The conclusion Spencer draws from his theory is that a falling birth-rate is at once "a consequence of the struggle for existence and in part a means of abating it"; a contention which, to my mind, at least, seems hardly to hold water, since the same fact cannot well be held responsible for the multiplication of the less dignified and worthy organism and as part of a means of abating that multiplication.

We shall see quite clearly that Spencer's theory does not cover the whole ground, if we notice the varying decreases of the birth-rate which are now in steady progress amongst the white peoples of the world. For instance, in the German Empire the decrease in the twenty-two years already cited amounts

to twelve per cent., in France to fifteen per cent., in England and Wales to seventeen per cent., in Victoria to twenty-five per cent., and in New South Wales to no less than thirty-three per cent. We may allow everything possible for the idea that "cerebral development" tends to lessen fecundity; but there is no such difference between the cerebral development of the Teuton and that of the Australian colonist as would account for so prodigious a disparity in the figures given. The plain fact is that the decrease is wilful, and that the well-meant doctrines of the Eugenic school are operating—as by their very nature they were bound to operate—in the wrong places. The case becomes more striking yet when we discover that the decrease in the birth-rate of New South Wales is almost five times that of the decrease in Sweden. No "cerebral development" theory will account for that.

In some respects the article now under consideration is, I think, the saddest with which I ever had to deal, and the dreadful statistics which are furnished by the writer do most assuredly justify him in searching for *some* means by which the miseries of the submerged classes may be ameliorated. By no means the most mournful of the facts exposed is the great growth in infant mortality. In the year 1905, in England and Wales alone, no fewer than one hundred and twenty thousand children died in infancy, and in an enormous majority of cases were undoubtedly well out of the sad conditions into which they had been born. The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes emphasises the conclusion that the preponderance of infantile over adult mortality is very largely due to overcrowding; but the Report goes on to say that there is a great deal of suffering

among little children in overcrowded districts that does not appear in the death-rate at all. "In St. Luke's, ophthalmia, locally known as the blight, among the young is very prevalent, and can be traced to the ill-ventilated rooms in which they live." The general standard of vitality is lowered ; all manner of congenital disorders appear ; and much lifelong suffering is induced which does not find its way into the bills of mortality, however carefully they may be prepared. All this is sufficiently disheartening ; but it sinks into comparative insignificance by the side of an official report presented early this year to the London County Council, which revealed in startling fashion the physical and mental condition of a large number of children attending the Council's elementary schools. The medical officer examined 1,212 children, of whom he recommended that 431 should be placed in schools for the mentally affected, 169 in specially equipped schools for the physically defective, whilst he found thirty-three to be imbecile and 225 to be "invalids and unsuitable for school attendance." Out of the 1,212 there were 858 ineffectives—very nearly three-quarters of the whole.

It is very evident that these do not form a stock from which we can hope to build a stalwart race, and it is equally evident that you may preach to them the doctrines of the Eugenic school until voice and heart break together without getting them to pay the remotest kind of heed to you for a single hour. Like many another specific for the relief of social ills, it might be altogether an excellent idea if it were not for the fact that it is absolutely impracticable. The people to whom it is essential that this gospel of deliverance should be preached are very precisely the people who will pay no heed to it, and the danger

which lies in its propagation is seen clearly enough in the decrease in the number of children in homes of the well-to-do. There has been a prodigious amount of nonsense talked and written to the effect that its population is the most valuable asset of a country. It may be either that or the veriest succubus feeding on its vitals. Whether it is the one or the other must depend upon its character, and if the decrease in the birth-rate were operating in the proper quarter it would be a sign to welcome joyfully and by no means to regret.

The more closely one looks into this problem the more insoluble it appears. Huxley, writing a quarter of a century ago, described it as the true riddle of the Sphinx, and warned us that every nation which does not solve it will sooner or later be devoured by the monster itself has generated. It is not cheering to remark that it has never yet been solved. Empire after empire has succumbed before it, and so must we in turn, and that right early if we continue to approach our peril at our present speed. But a specific which can only be voluntarily applied is no specific for those who will not do so much as look at it. And what form of compulsion can conceivably be exerted? We are deterred even from an adequate discussion of the question by what John Stuart Mill stigmatised as a spurious delicacy and by a wholly false conception of morality. That is moral—and that alone is moral—which tends towards the well-being of humanity, and the Eugenic doctrine should have met with no discouragement on moral grounds in these columns if it appeared to me to hold out any hope in that direction. But it has malefically influenced the classes to which it was never meant to apply. It has done, is doing, and will continue to

do an infinite disservice to the world among the idle rich and the selfish intellectual ; whilst it is not doing, has not done, and cannot possibly ever do one atom of good amongst the classes for whose relief and benefit it was intended.

The Socialist, of course, imagines himself to have discovered in the benevolent tyranny of the populace a cure for all social ills, and this of an unfit population amongst them. When he has established his system everybody will be so well fed, well housed, and well clad that the diseases which have been generated by poverty and overcrowding will gradually disappear. But one of the root troubles is that, in the course of many years of Socialistic legislation, we have gradually eaten away the manhood of our people, so that here and there and everywhere the Individual has learned to rely upon the State for that which it has been his eternal duty to provide for himself. What is really in request, if we only knew it, is the creation of a sense of manhood and individual responsibility. It will be responded that this is not the sort of plant that thrives and blossoms in a city slum, and the retort is absolutely just and true. At the present moment civilisation is burning the candle at both ends and melting it at the middle. It is consuming itself at the one end by the egregious luxury begotten of an egregious wealth, and at the other end by a poverty which induces or intensifies all the evils to which human flesh is heir, and, in merely comfortable and well-to-do society, it is denying itself the advantage of those recuperative and redressing forces which it has at its disposal.

## SANITY AND SUICIDE.

A recent suicide left this appeal to his friends : " I beg you not to regard this as an act of madness. My sufferings have become unbearable, and I must end them." The coroner's jury returned a verdict of temporary insanity in the case. Quite recently a consumptive patient in a metropolitan hospital, whose life was absolutely despaired of, and who had in any case but to wait a day or two for his release, put a violent end to his own existence. The medical men who gave evidence spoke of " cardiac delirium," but were doubtful as to whether it could arise as suddenly as it must have done if it were the operative cause in this particular instance. Again a verdict of temporary insanity was returned. Within the past two or three years I have read of many cases in which the intending suicide has protested beforehand against the verdict which was almost certain to be returned. In many cases the judgment arrived at by a coroner's jury is no doubt influenced by a feeling of sympathy with the relatives of the deceased. A verdict of *felo-de-se*—that is, of conscious and deliberate self-slaughter—entails some disagreeable consequences, and is supposed to leave a stigma upon the memory of the dead, who is regarded as having committed a high crime and misdemeanour against the realm as well as against the Divine ordinances. Not very long ago any person found guilty of *felo-de-se* was buried in darkness and ignominy. He is still refused burial in consecrated ground, and is deprived of the final rites of the Church. It must often happen that

a jury will mercifully distort its verdict rather than submit the friends and relatives of a suicide to the pain and mortification which must necessarily attend a finding to the effect that he went to his end in the full possession of his reason.

But there are certain cases in which it is quite impossible to regard suicide as a crime against the commonwealth, and where it is difficult to find any evidence of the promptings of insanity. Take an example. A man is fatally wounded in savage warfare. He knows that neither rescue nor recovery is possible for him, but his comrade will not leave him to fall alone into the hands of a pitiless enemy. He anticipates his own ending by an hour, and in so doing escapes death by torture, and in the same act saves the life of a friend by giving him full licence to escape. Here every motive of self-interest and of chivalry appears to accompany an act which is generally regarded as an indication of cowardice or of an actual destruction of the mental balance. It would be easy to imagine countless cases in which suicide would really amount to an act of virtue. Nobody, for example, blames Rebecca in "Ivanhoe" for the threat of self-destruction by which she repulses the criminal advances of the Templar. The severest moralist does not condemn the spontaneous martyrdom which was again and again invited throughout the history of the early Church. The heart thrills at the heroism of the leader of a forlorn hope who not merely marches to his own certain death, but leads the men of his command to a similar fate. Clearly the voluntary ending of one's own life is not in all cases either a crime against the State or an evidence of insanity.

The very nature and character of the act itself must,

therefore, be seen to depend upon its motive. There are conditions under which it is not merely lawful, but laudable, and yet there is a very obvious danger in saying so unless these conditions are very clearly understood. But a careful consideration of this question leads us to ask ourselves whether modern civilisation has not drifted into a false position with regard to the view it takes as to the sanctity of human life *per se*. We conserve much human life which is not merely worthless and even terrible to its possessor, but is in itself a menace to the general well-being. A murderer who has attempted suicide is tenderly nursed back to life in order that he may be legally killed upon the scaffold. Every device of surgical art is employed, and the man is as gently nurtured and tended as if his continued existence were a matter of extremest moment to his fellows. And when we have coaxed him from the jaws of death we hang him. We perpetuate his life for no other reason than that he should die by law. I do not at present suggest a remedy, but I do suggest that the thing in itself is anomalous and involves a refinement of cruelty. At the time when the late Pope lay in the death agony—to cite a case at the far end of the line of argument—the nature of his disorder and his own advanced age made his recovery absolutely impossible. There was no scintilla of a hope in the mind of any living creature that the sufferer could be restored to health and activity. Yet the skill of his physicians was taxed to the utmost—for what purpose? To keep an old, tired, and suffering man upon the rack of pain to the uttermost moment. Now, in the case of the suicidal murderer there is, at least, the one argument which is advanced by those who believe in death-bed repentances, that the man has time given

him to "make his soul," as the old Irish saying has it, but this argument will hardly apply to a venerable ecclesiastic who has filled the highest office of his Church for years and has always been prepared to make a pious ending.

The root-idea is that, whether it be to the advantage of the patient himself or to the advantage of the commonwealth at large or no, it is our duty to conserve the mere animal life of a human being to the latest possible instant. This is an error which the wisdom of future generations will probably correct. The useless infliction of pain cannot be regarded as justifiable by any person of sense or sensibility who will really put himself to the pain of thinking about the matter. I have never been able to advocate the abolition of the death penalty for certain cruel and *calculated* forms of murder in which the threat of it might conceivably operate as a deterrent, but the gallows is a shape of barbarism which might well be abandoned for the lethal chamber. It appears to me, at least, that in the higher civilisation which awaits the world the lethal chamber may play a somewhat conspicuous, although a gradually decreasing part. I cannot fail to think that mere life, as distinct from all capacities for usefulness and enjoyment, will lose the superstitious sanction it now enjoys. For what good purpose is the life of a hopeless *cretin* preserved? Why is a man sedulously restrained at a great expenditure of skill and money from the gratification of a suicidal mania which is known to be permanently rooted? Why is a patient who suffers from an ineradicable and agonising illness, which is acknowledged to be incurable, to be denied the rest for which his whole nature craves? If it is answered that those to whom the patient is dearest desire that his life

may be prolonged, one may answer in the profoundly human words of Shakespeare :

Oh, let him pass ! He hates him much  
That would upon the rack of this tough world  
Stretch him out longer.

The old proverb, “ While there’s life, there’s hope,” has had a good deal to do with the feeling with regard to the sanctity of human life even at its extremest moments. But no man of observation will deny that there are thousands of cases every day in which, though life still exists, hope is extinct, even in the breasts of the most sanguine. Life is worth living so long as it can be usefully and honourably employed, so long as there is a reasonable hope that its career of use and honour can be extended, and so long as its sufferings are capable of such ameliorations as make the sufferer cling to it. When it ceases to be useful, when all hope of use has vanished, and when it can only be sustained at the cost of pain, its value has departed, and its artificial sustentation becomes a crime which is only disguised by a thin veneer of sentiment.

De Quincey, as the readers of his essay “ On Suicide,” will remember, marks a strong differentiation between self-homicide and self-murder. If I remember him aright, he draws the line somewhat thus : “ In general, whenever a paramount interest of human nature is at stake a suicide which maintains that interest is self-homicide ; but for a personal interest it becomes self-murder.” According to his view a woman, for instance, has a right to commit suicide to escape dishonour, and a man of honour has the right to the same method of escape from the degradation of corporal chastisement. Whether this definition may be held to be exhaustive is an open question. It ought

certainly to be understood that every sufferer from suicidal mania who succeeds in his design upon himself confers a distinct benefit upon the community, since it is no longer incumbent upon the State to maintain a valueless person in a condition of costly restraint. Attention has again and again been called to the enormous increase in the recorded number of lunatics in this kingdom, and although it does not necessarily follow that *all* suicidal acts are acts of maniacs, it is noticeable that suicide and lunacy keep pace with one another.

In the three years 1857 to 1860 there were reported to the police 172 attempted suicides. From 1897 to 1899 no fewer than 2,067 were recorded. In the latter year there were 2,844 certified suicides in England and Wales. In a very remarkable pamphlet published by Dr. Robert Reid Rentoul, late a member of the General Council of Medical Education for the United Kingdom, the question is quite frankly posed : "Are we justified in endeavouring to prevent lunatics and other degenerates from committing suicide ? Are we justified in refusing the right to the incurably deranged and diseased to leap from a Clifton or other bridge ? Are we right in giving medals and other rewards to persons who have prevented the would-be suicide from putting his craving into effect ?" There are many people to whom these queries will appear to be shocking and inhuman, but readers of the "Utopia" will remember that Sir Thomas More, who was certainly neither impious nor inhumane, represents the responsible guides of his ideal republic as advising suicide to all who were incurably afflicted.

The suggestion has nothing of novelty, nor has another suggestion which Dr. Rentoul's brochure is especially written to advocate. The difficulty which

surrounds Dr. Rentoul's proposal is that it will be impossible to carry it into effect until an enormous force of public opinion has been gathered to its support, whilst from its very nature it can only be freely discussed *in camera*, and in publications of an exclusively scientific character. Its whole purpose is to make an end by a single legislative enactment of the fecundity of mental and physical degenerates. There is no doubt whatever that these dangerous elements in our population are increasing at a most alarming speed. It is not less than frightful to learn that in Scotland since 1858 there has been, according to the report of the Board of Commissioners, an increase of *one hundred and eighty per cent.* in the number of those certified insane! In England and Wales in 1898 there was an increase on the previous year of 3,114. In 1899 there was a further increase of 1,525. In 1900 there was an increase of 1,333. Every three-hundredth person in England and Wales is now certified insane. Nor does this doleful record afford a lonely sign of a growing degeneracy. Here, for instance, is a paragraph which deserves to be studied :

"The 'Report of the Army Medical Department (1901) casts further light upon degeneracy. In that year 76,750 recruits were inspected. Of this number 21,522 were rejected as unfit, and of the 55,228 selected no less than 1,014 were discharged from the Army within three months of their enlistment. Among the many causes for rejection were—defective vision, 2,751; loss or decay of many teeth, 2,049; disease of veins, 1,073; varicocele, 1,066; under height, 1,041; under chest measurement, 3,829; under weight, 1,920."

There exists no doubt whatever that our charitable institutions operate in many instances to preserve lives which are not merely of no value to the commonwealth but are positively dangerous to its stability, because they are allowed to perpetuate their own maladies

in the persons of their offspring. It is not easy to see how this condition of things is to be remedied, because the one obvious cure for it which is suggested in the brochure now before me is one which will never be publicly discussed, and without the completest illumination on the subject no public opinion strong enough to bring it into operation can be awakened. But the facts with which Dr. Reid Rentoul has to deal are open and patent to everybody. A great number of the men and women of our prison population are provably the descendants of degenerates. Quite a large proportion of our lunacy is hereditary. There are thousands of instances of ophthalmia which are directly due to the tainted blood of one parent or another. A surgeon who has before him a case of that dental disorder which is known to doctors as "Hutchinson's teeth," can predicate with absolute certainty the taint from which the parent suffered. It is one which in itself makes parentage the worst of crimes. In the State of Minnesota there is an Act forbidding marriage to any person suffering from epilepsy, imbecility, or insanity, but it is not found to have much good result. The axe must be laid to the root of the evil, and the perpetuation of the race of the mentally unfit must be seen to be, what it truly is, the worst of crimes against humanity.

The figures given by Dr. Rentoul are truly shocking. It is not an agreeable thing to write about, but no considerations of squeamishness should allow us to conceal from ourselves the fact that in a single year the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has had to prosecute in no fewer than 10,796 cases of "unmoral outrage." All these cases are traceable to sexual insanity, and we have to add to them 9,555 other offences arising in the same space of time from

the same disease. All these infamies are classed officially as crimes, whilst, in fact, they all afford evidence either of actual insanity or of the deepest degeneracy. It is time that a Medical Council should be called, and that public opinion should insist upon the acceptance of its decision by the State.

### THE DRUNKARD AND THE LAW.

IN November, 1906, the annual Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Act—Dr. R. Walsh Brathwaite—was given to the public. Amidst much extremely dry, if necessary, detail, there was a great deal of profoundly interesting matter. The Report received the usual perfunctory attention from time to time extended to similar documents by the Press; but I have failed to find anything like a reasoned *précis* of it, or any allusion to one of its most striking features. To that feature I shall recur hereafter; but for the moment it must be my object to deal with Dr. Brathwaite's argument as a whole. And here it may be observed in passing that a very remarkable change has come over the Blue Book in comparatively recent years; so that it appears no longer to be compiled by a statistical machine, and dictated through an official of gutta-percha, but is actually inspired by some kind of human interest, and appears, indeed, in not a few instances, to be shaped into an instrument for the construction of a propaganda.

Whilst there can be no doubt whatever that alcoholic excess is a prolific source of disease and of mental instability, it is Dr. Brathwaite's belief, after many years of experience and inquiry, that disease and mental instability are even more provocative of the

alcoholic habit. It has always been the fashion to regard poverty, squalor, disease, and—to a large extent insanity—as the results of the drunken habits of the people. Dr. Brathwaite is firmly persuaded that the drunken habits of the people are in the main a result and not a cause. It is evident, of course, that in cases of this kind the influences on either side must aid in the aggravation of each separate evil. But the first essential to a hopeful dealing with them all is the discovery of the main root of mischief. In Dr. Brathwaite's opinion alcoholism, in its more vicious and destructive form, is allied with want and despair, and to him it is evident that, if it is either to be abolished or got under reasonable control, we must make our attack upon the citadels of social misery.

The central argument of the Report is that in our magisterial dealings with the habitual inebriate we are penalising disease. The conclusion arrived at is that at least sixty-two per cent. of the so-called habitual drunkards met with in police-courts are "a variety of a larger complex body of insane and mentally defective persons." The magisterial judgment, expressed in a fine of so many shillings, or an alternative of so many days' imprisonment, in most cases has the effect of removing the wretched object from the streets for a shorter or a longer space of time; but it not only fails to check the progress of mental disintegration which is going on, but positively accelerates it, and it is frankly impossible to examine the instances and arguments brought forward in this Report without arriving at the conclusion that our police-court treatment of habitual inebriates is entirely irrational and cruel. The Report speaks of the "old-time ignorance concerning the psychological and

neurotic aspect of the question," and whilst it may be allowed that this ignorance in part palliated the police-court treatment of twenty years ago, it must be admitted that the present existence of such treatment, in face of all evidence of uselessness, is inexplicable.

We are told that at this time there are considerably over a thousand persons under reformatory detention whose history is one of gradual descent into the abyss, and many of whom have been marked as prison recidivists for ten or fifteen years, or even more. The cycle through which these hapless persons have been driven by their own want of self-control and by the application of a wholly inadequate and misdirected law is set forth with a dreadful simplicity. "A drunken orgie, a prison van, a bath, prison clothes, a tramp to the cells, a horrible night, followed by tremulous days, bare subsistence diet, many hours of monotony, expiry of sentence, discharge to the streets, a few days of liberty, more drunkenness." One is reminded of a foolish old story at which one used to laugh in childhood. It was recorded of an Irish hodman that, after having tumbled half-way down a lofty ladder, he was asked if he had been injured by the fall, and he responded that the fall in itself was nothing, but that the sudden stop at the bottom had been painful. Any medical man will tell you—and if you are a person of any experience and have studied your world at first hand you will not need to be told—that there are few things more horrible in the whole catalogue of pathological experience than the sufferings of the suddenly-arrested drunkard. Assuming Dr. Brathwaite to be correct in his belief that the excessive habitual yielding to the temptation of alcohol does in itself indicate a condition of mental

unsoundness, one can readily understand how the effect of a long succession of nervous crises induced in this manner may serve to disintegrate the whole nervous system and how each successive detention renders the victim of the habit less and less susceptible to reform.

One fact comes out with great clearness in this invaluable Report, and, if the public can be made to digest it, we shall at least be prompted to set our feet in the right direction. The first Inebriate Act came into force more than a quarter of a century ago ; but it was not until nineteen years later that the authorities arrived at any practical decision as to the segregation of the hopeless and the comparatively hopeful classes of inebriate. Even during the last eight years it has been the practice of the law to lock the stable door years after the steed has been stolen. It has been our principle to see that our inebriates have been practically beyond reform before placing them in a reformatory. There are some statistics now before the country the publication of which should tend to bring about a sounder and a wiser state of things. For instance, the one hundred and fifteenth police-court conviction against one "M. S., female, age forty-one," was recorded December 29, 1905, when the prisoner was sent to the Southern Counties Inebriate Reformatory at Lewes for three years. Her first conviction was recorded almost twenty-four years earlier, and between the two dates there is one dreadful story of drunkenness, disorder, obscenity, assault, solicitation, attempted suicide, and attempts at theft ; and in the icy statistical column one sees the hapless wretch going step by step downward and downward, the convictions growing more and more numerous from year to year : two in 1882,

six in 1886, seven in 1888, ten in 1891, and the progression only checked by here and there an interregnum of hard labour, ranging from fourteen days to fifteen months.

There is another equally melancholy case recorded in which on her one hundredth conviction "S. B., female, age forty-one" was sent to the Eastern Counties Reformatory for three years. But surely a reformatory should exist for the reformable, and if society had been as alive to its duties at the beginning of these tragic careers as it is gradually growing to be, there might have been some hope of saving these women from the slough into which they have since entered. It is a pleasure to learn that at least one "well-known stipendiary magistrate," appreciating the evil influence of prison in these cases, has outlined for himself and his fellow-justiciaries a practical and sensible course. He suggests that, instead of holding the threat of prison over habitual drunkards, the idea of the reformatory shall be kept before them from the first, and that each successive conviction shall be looked upon as a step towards it. The first offence is met by a stern caution; the second by a severe reminder; the third by a binding over to be of good behaviour; and the fourth by a committal to a reformatory. Under these conditions the first period of detention might well be comparatively transitory; but a relapse would call, automatically, for an extension, and by this method there might be some hope of restoring a partially degenerate nervous system. Under the existing *régime* there is practically no such hope. Those two women, with more than a hundred convictions apiece in the space of twenty years, are clearly objects for a life-long detention, unless by any stretch of imagination it is to be supposed that any

good purpose can be achieved by permitting the poor creatures to be indulged in one more riotous exhibition of proclivities that have now become incurable.

An examination of the statistics which accompany the Report reveals the fact that women are not only more generally susceptible to alcoholic temptation than men, but that they are susceptible, on an average, at an earlier age. For example, amongst those now under detention there are only three males as against twenty-four females under twenty-one years of age. Under thirty years of age there are no fewer than three hundred and twenty-one females as against fifty-one males. Amongst married women there are two hundred and three inmates of the various reformatories as against one hundred and sixty-four spinsters—a fact which does not speak well for the married state. Every here and there, as one glances down these columns, one finds a number leaping at the eye, as, for example, when, after eight lines which deal with no more than twelve people engaged in masculine labour, one arrives suddenly at the word “charwoman,” and finds no fewer than two hundred and nineteen under that heading. Of domestic servants there are two hundred and sixteen. Amongst housewives there are two hundred and seventy-three. Amongst laundresses there are two-hundred and nineteen, and whilst amongst people of exclusively masculine occupation double figures are reached four times only, the second century is passed by the women just as often, and double figures are reached not less than half a score of times. In point of fact, out of the total number committed to the Inebriate Reformatories, no fewer than sixteen hundred and eight are women, whilst the men count only two

hundred and sixty-five. If it were ever possible for a review of statistics to arouse society to a sense of duty it would be so here. The one inescapable truth is that the conditions under which the mothers of our race exist are in some way more wearing and debasing than they are to the stronger sex, serious as their effect may be even there.

The special point is that the principle of voluntary surrender to curative means has actually been accepted by a greater number of people than has been legally compelled to adopt them. The high-water mark in private retreats for the cure of dipsomania and the various drug habits was reached in the year 1902, when no fewer than five hundred and fifty-two patients were living under a self-imposed restraint. At the time at which the Report under consideration was issued this number had fallen to four hundred and nineteen. But up to the present hour the number of total committals is almost rivalled by the number of those voluntary surrenders which do at least argue a desire on the part of the patient to be redeemed from a besetting weakness.

It seems to me that nothing can be so valuable as the extension of the *desire* to be cured. It is possible to create that desire by laying hold of the victim of alcoholism whilst he or she is yet young and open to a sense of self-respect and the good opinion of others. To take the staled and broken huck of the streets, who has her hundred convictions behind her, and whose power of will has been ground out of her by the degrading experiences of half a lifetime, and to send her to a reformatory is pathetically hopeless. To lay hold upon her whilst she is still young and capable of shame—and, therefore, capable of self-restraint—is the very obvious duty of the State. There is one

male imbecile of eighty-two years of age now under reformatory influence. He lived to be over sixty before the police brought a complaint against him, and since then—what with poverty and its attendant miseries and the falling-off of friends—he has become “an inebriate recidivist”—poor old beggar—as a great many more of us might under similar conditions. The conclusion of the whole matter is that it is our duty to attack this particular evil in its early stages and not to wait until it has become incurable before we try to cure it.

**POLITICAL**



## MR. CHAMBERLAIN AND BIRMINGHAM.\*

THERE is a great contrast between the figure presented by Mr. Chamberlain to the Empire at large and that presented by the same man to his own constituents. Alike to the Empire and to the city of Birmingham, he is, of course, the fighting politician to whom warfare is as the breath of his nostrils ; a keen, alert, and strenuous personality which may always be looked for at the point at which the most moving interests of the hour are concentrated. He is born to battle as the sparks fly upward, and on that side of character he presents the same aspect to the observer alike in the larger and the smaller field. But in the city of his adoption he occupies a position which is altogether unique. Since the days when Mr. Chamberlain was an ardent debater in the imitation parliament of Edgbaston, through the time when he was in turn a member of the Town Council, an Alderman and Mayor, and, as a member of the School Board, one of the champions of unsectarian education, on to that at which the late George Dixon made way for his companionship with Bright and Muntz, and from then till now he has been the unswerving and untiring servant of his immediate neighbours. He has never offered himself to the suffrages of another constituency. He has never had need to look for another avenue to the arena of public life. He has devoted his life with

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\* Written in 1903.

a very fortunate fidelity to the place in which his earliest business interests were cast, and his reward is that he has grown to be paterfamilias to his own city.

It is rather difficult to realise the truth about Mr. Chamberlain, but in Birmingham, at least, he is Nestor. In point of fact, he is within three years of the span of life allotted to man by the Psalmist. I think I have already claimed in these pages the odd little distinction of having been the sole reporter of the speech in which he first addressed his constituents at what Birmingham men used emphatically to call a "Bright meeting." It is, roughly, thirty years ago, and the slim figure with the eye-glass is still pretty much the figure of to-day. There are few men in whose outward aspect time has wrought so little difference, or so it seems to one who sees him only from the standpoint of one in the crowd. Yet all his local contemporaries save his staunch henchman, Mr. Collings, have fallen away. Bright, who towered over him in his own day ; Dale and Dawson, who were his elders and his leaders ; all the crowd who were in the van of the Municipal Idea : all have vanished. And "Our Joe" has grown venerable.

It was in this character of patriarch, which seems somehow to sit rather oddly on the shoulders of a man so young in aspect and in energy, that Mr. Chamberlain delivered his latest speech to his own political family party. Amongst other offices he holds is that of Chancellor of the University of Birmingham. It is only five years since the idea of that University was broached, and on the fourth of this month (July) it fell to the Chancellor to confer degrees on fifty graduates in Arts, Science, Medicine, and Dentistry. As almost everybody knows, the nucleus of the

present University was provided by the wise benevolence of Mr. Josiah Mason, who built and endowed a college in the town in whose prosperity he had been one of the most fortunate participants. The men to whom it occurred to extend his good work asked originally for a quarter of a million sterling ; they have since enlarged their ideas and they are now asking for a whole million, of which nearly one half has already been subscribed, whilst there is no doubt as to the ultimate gathering of the larger moiety. To the enlightened educationalist the programme laid down for itself by this University reads like a veritable gospel of good tidings. It is to be a genuine seat of learning, conservative enough to retain within its curriculum all those elements of scholarship to which the older educational corporations confine themselves, whilst it will give to its students every conceivable opportunity for the mastery of those actual arts on which their future livelihood will depend, and especially for those handicrafts with which nature and usage alike have most closely allied the city and its neighbourhood. " Every branch of learning which has its technical side will be separately represented by its own library, its own laboratory, and its own museum."

" You will find," said the Chancellor, " when we open these buildings to the public, great halls, filled with the necessary apparatus for scientific teaching and training—the hall of machines where everything that is most valuable in modern invention will be represented—testing apparatus of every description, steel-making plant, shops for wood-working and for foundries, and, indeed, everything which can illustrate and promote the teaching of the scientific subjects which is our first object." When the speaker first entered

upon public life such a scheme could scarcely have been propounded with any hope of its translation into fact, but now the whole thing is practically nine-tenths on its way to fulfilment, and the new University has already made one prodigious stride towards the accomplishment of its own especial purposes in establishing for the first time a Faculty and a Degree for Commerce. The curriculum for this new degree "will include economics, modern languages, accounting, commercial law, commercial history, and commercial geography." Hitherto nothing could have been imagined more barbarous, antiquated, and useless than the general conception of education which still prevailed in our great centres of learning. Here at last we are to be in touch with life and its requirements. To the business man such a tuition as is here proposed, must be of incalculable service, and even the man predestined to a life of leisure will be vastly better employed in the struggle for honours in this school than he ever was in the keenest study of the dead languages or the higher mathematics. Nothing could well be of greater use to the nascent statesman than such a course of study, and now that we once have it at our disposal it should be a *sine qua non* amongst the qualifications of every English consul that he has graduated in it with credit.

Another new departure is the construction of a model mine—the real subterranean article—in which the business of a mining engineer can be taught and learned under as near an approach to practical conditions as can be secured. A scientific knowledge of the principles of ventilation in mines is much more general than it used to be. Thousands of lives have been sacrificed in the past for the want of it, in Scotch, Welsh, and English coal mines, and even

now we find whole districts occasionally plunged into mourning and poverty by some entirely preventable disaster which has had its origin in ignorance or neglect. The construction of this model mine will be a boon, not alone to the district for whose use it is immediately intended, but to the underground worker everywhere the wide world over. The *desiderata* to be sought in mines are : fresh air, scientific timbering and dialling, and a safe and efficient means of illumination. The latter will probably be found in electricity, and although the expensive character of an installation stands in the way at present, it is safe to prophesy that a technical college will not be long in existence before the difficulties which now surround the production of a cheap portable light will be surmounted.

This leads us naturally to one consideration of the first importance. Such a curriculum as that of the new technical University of Birmingham cannot fail to produce a crop of inventions and appliances whose creators will naturally desire to shelter themselves under Royal Letters Patent. Ever since young Mr. Tite Barnacle made the acquaintance of Arthur Clennam's partner in the immortal pages of Dickens, the English people have known the Patent Laws of this country to be nothing less than a scandal to our civilisation. They were so when the great satirist exposed the Circumlocution Office in all its illustrative ramifications of the art of "How Not to Do It." They had always been so from the time when they first joggled themselves into their own inept and futile notion of a system. They are so at this hour and they will continue to be so until some man of the Chamberlain type—some statesman with a knowledge of business—takes them in hand, for the express purpose

of doing away with them, and setting some cheap, workable, and rapid method in their place. The Chancellor of the new University has probably about as much upon his hands already as even he cares to undertake. With his campaign in favour of a revision of our fiscal policy, it is not to be supposed that he can afford to turn aside to consider an issue which, however important in itself, is so small in comparison with the work upon which he is engaged. But it might be worth his while, if his attention were drawn to the matter, to indicate to the general Faculty that in the present ungodly condition of our Patent Laws a school of real technical education is likely enough to become a school of heart-break for many of its students.

If the University of Birmingham is not to be rich in inventors of large things and small it must be a failure. It is not doomed to failure. It is certain to breed inventors by the dozen and the score, and its authoritative examination of the whole Patent question, followed by the clear dictation of necessary reforms, could not fail to be met by the respectful consideration of Parliament. *En attendant* it might institute a small and inexpensive staff for research, so that an inventor in their schools might be spared the heart-wringing trouble and heavy expense of groping through the jungle of specifications which has broken alike the purse and the spirit of so many. May one not even say that the University owes it to a class of men whom it is aiming specially to create to make their way as smooth as possible ?

## THE IRISH DANGER.\*

THERE is no trace of the philosophic doubter in Mr. Balfour's declaration concerning the policy of the Government with respect to Ireland. He proclaims it "a deliberate and intentional fraud upon the British electorate." These would, under some conditions, be thought serious words, and unless the Pickwickian value of the epithets is understood, the statesman who is not entirely honest in their use—who is not, indeed, moved to a genuine passion of godly anger—is deserving of some reprobation. You cannot charge a man or a body of men with anything more vile than "deliberate and intentional fraud." Of course the Government is not acting on the square. It is trying to play off upon the electorate one of the disingenuous dodgeries which make up the staple of party tactics. It is pretending to the Irish Party that it is marching on to Home Rule, and it is pretending to the Liberal Party in England that Home Rule is not in question—at present. But, then, it is not the habit of a political party to act on the square. The game is being played according to the rules. The Government—in quite the customary way—is attempting to steal a march, and the Leader of the Opposition—in quite the customary way—is torn with holy anger and pious grief at the sight of so much turpitude. The partisan manœuvre and the partisan denunciation of it may be disregarded by all reasonable people. What the country needs to understand may be very simply defined. Where is

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\* Written in the spring of 1907.

the Government going? What is it going for? Does the movement promise good or evil?

Each of the first two questions may be answered in a phrase. The Government is offering to Ireland an instalment of Home Rule. Its purpose in bestowing the instalment is to prepare for the surrender of the whole. As to these points there is no room for any difference of opinion. Mr. Redmond, as representing Ireland, makes no bones about the matter. He is not to be satisfied until the Union is dissolved. No third-of-the-way house of Devolution will content him. No half-way house of Home Rule will content him. Mr. Birrell, as representing the Cabinet, is prepared to grant "the larger measure," though not necessarily to grant the largest. The latter means the actual disruption of Ireland from Great Britain and their existence thereafter as alien states. The former signifies such a reconstruction of relationship as was emphatically rejected by the constituencies when Mr. Gladstone was finally hurled from power. The issue is precisely what it was in that statesman's day, except that Ireland now makes its claim with noisier confidence. The greatest leader under whom Liberalism ever marched thought himself strong enough to carry the position by open assault. He failed, signally and decisively, and in his fall he shattered the army which had been his instrument. His successor knows that the cause is not to be won by the Gladstonian disdain of strategy. He proposes to advance by sap and mine, and by pushing forward his parallels as the Japanese did at Port Arthur or the Allies before Sebastopol.

As to what will happen in the immediate future it is easily possible to form an intelligent anticipation. Mr. Birrell's Bill will pass the Commons, will be returned by the Lords, and will be ultimately submitted

to the Nation. Its rejection by the Upper Chamber will be denounced as a new defiance of the will of the sovereign people, though, as a matter of mere fact, the sovereign people has had no chance for the expression of its will, one way or the other, since it rejected the proposal for Home Rule. By the time at which the sovereign people is called upon to express its mind about things it will find itself muddled up with that "something terrible" which Lord Rosebery has just said to be in preparation for the House of Lords ; with that "something drastic" which is to be done about the temperance question ; with the proposal to "tear the land system up by the roots and remodel it throughout this island" ; with a vast scheme of Army reform ; and with the customary farrago of fads and trifles. Not one of the big things here enumerated will fail to provoke a struggle ; the Government cannot and does not expect an immediate and easy triumph in respect to any one of them. It cannot even be supposed that it desires such a triumph, since one of its objects is to present a cumulative accusation against the Lords, and another of its objects is to shirk the Irish danger by mixing the question of Home Rule with as large a mass of things extraneous to it as possible.

But the nation will make no mistake about the matter. Devolution is openly confessed to be a step towards Home Rule, and Home Rule is openly declared to be a step towards Disruption. Let it be imagined that the dream of the most ardent of the Nationalists is accomplished. Let it be imagined—if imagination can fly so far—that the racial and religious wars are over, and that the Ultramontane lamb and the Orange lion (or the Ultramontane lion and the Orange lamb) are lying peaceably together. Let it be imagined that the green flag of Erin has become a national

symbol ; that the Irish are a People, depending, like other Peoples, upon their own resources for defence, or upon such alliances as a sense of mutual advantage might induce other nations to enter into. Except that she might be made to serve as a naval base, of what conceivable use could her alliance be to any Power in the world ? In the eternal and unchangeable nature of things she *must* be under some protectorate. If that of Great Britain were withdrawn she would be as defenceless as a mollusc which has cast its shell.

A very remarkable article on "Ireland and Sea-power" appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* for April (1907). The writer urged that "with the neighbouring island turned into a foreign base, England would be irretrievably destroyed. She would not merely be flanked. Between Irish and Continental hostility she would be enclosed. The situation of no great Power in the world would be so hopeless." There could be nothing truer. And mark the corollary. Not even the utter ruin of this country would make Ireland independent. "That country, under the conditions of any conceivable future into which human insight can penetrate, would be the vassal of any Power which might succeed us in the mastery of the seas." It is idle to regard this as a visionary fear either for Ireland or ourselves, or to speak of it as if it were at an astronomic distance. The danger is quite real, and any step in the direction of Home Rule must of necessity bring it nearer. The temporary fulfilment of those aspirations which Mr. Redmond has so often expressed in the House of Commons and outside it could result only in their complete and final annihilation. Great Britain cannot afford to invite the disaster which would inevitably befall her, nor could Ireland achieve any other result by the proposed change

than to introduce a Government more alien than our own. It is not to be supposed that America would willingly complicate her international relationships by any acceptance of responsibility on European soil. She would risk everything and gain nothing. If any change of rule should be brought about at all it would most probably be the rule of Germany which would be substituted for that of Great Britain. That is by no means what Ireland wants, but it would be the very likeliest thing in the world for Germany to make a bid for if the Nationalist dream came true.

The thing that happened with the old Liberal Party is already beginning to repeat itself. It is quite true that Lord Rosebery has held no commerce with the present Government, but until he spoke to the Liberal League at the "Westminster Palace Hôtel" last Tuesday it could not be said that he was in open hostility to it. On that occasion he declared that he owed it no allegiance and no confidence. He was not sure that he even owed it the common courtesies of life. The old-fashioned Liberalism is being Toryised. One of the fears his lordship expressed was lest the Liberal Party should find itself through some of its members permanently connected with hostility to property. That—whilst it is a natural object of regret for Lord Rosebery—is not without consolation for those of us who are waiting to see the position clearly defined and to hear the war-cry definitely raised. With regard to the question of Home Rule the one-time Liberal Premier is under no great apprehension ; but he allowed one of his characteristic flashes of humour to escape him. He did not believe that the new measure would be at all alarming. "Still, if the Government blew horns with a blast calculated to make the walls of Jericho fall down, and produced

only a very insignificant brick, it would get into difficulties not only with its Irish allies, but with its more extreme supporters." Which, again, is not without consolation for some of us.

Two facts are abundantly clear. Union is the begetter of power, and disruption is the begetter of feebleness in a nation. The United States gathered together in one body are practically unbreakable—may even be said to be unassailable. Unified Japan is recognised as a World Power. What was she before unification? A congeries of unregarded islands. United Italy takes her place amidst the comity of European nations. Germany is incalculably stronger since she abandoned Home Rule, and drew all her jarring little duchies and principalities into one organised military and diplomatic force. Sweden without Norway—Norway without Sweden, have less weight in the councils of the world than they had when the two spoke as one. Who does not recognise the fact that Austria-Hungary is more carefully to be reckoned with than either Austria or Hungary will have to be when they are parted?

An instrument which is being used for the Disruption of the Union is the Gaelic League, which, amongst its other purposes, designs the restoration of the ancient Irish language. There are few things with which it is easier to sympathise than the reverence for the by-gone, the desire to conserve the memories of a past which is full of inspiring and beautiful legend, and the visions of a lost glory. Sentimentally it is all very beautiful, but when the emotion results in the attempt to revive a dead civilisation, which could not in any solitary aspect reconcile itself with the conditions of modern life, when it aims to give life, action, and substance to a dream, it is only too likely to be

mischievous to its votaries. As a matter of sentiment the Gaelic revival is a charming thing. As a practical scheme for the advancement of the national prosperity it is palpably hopeless and absurd. Since the old Irish tongue fell into practical desuetude the human vocabulary has grown a hundredfold, and a man could no more carry on the business of life through the medium of the Erse to-day than he could if he were equipped only with the language of the Basque or the Esquimaus. The aim of the Gaelic League is to re-nationalise the old language. What is to become of the work of all the host of Irishmen of genius who have written in English? There is no doubt much characteristic and interesting matter in the native literature, but the literature by which Ireland is known to the world is written in English.

The plain fact is that there is not a sane Irishman alive who hopes to see the great Anglo-Saxon tongue made subsidiary to the Irish. There is not a sane Irishman alive who does not know that if his pretended aspirations were realised his beloved country would be fatally isolated from the civilised world. The whole business is actuated by a filmy sentimentalism, and there is no reality at the bottom of the claims which are urged with so much sound and foam. "Ireland a Nation" would be the prey of the first prowling Power. Ireland—robbed of the use of the English language—would have as much intellectual weight in the world as Hayti or Fiji. Its people have a characteristic and commanding genius of their own, and they succeed in impressing it so deeply upon the world because that "long and tragic subjection to an alien control" of which they make so much complaint has dowered them with all the facilities enjoyed by the dominant partner in the

firm. They have such a voice in the Legislature of this kingdom that there is nothing in reason which they cannot secure for the asking. Home Rule is out of reason, and Great Britain will refuse it to the end because it cannot do otherwise. If the suffering island could only weigh anchor and sail into the Gulf of Florida it might have Home Rule and welcome. But we cannot afford to establish a permanent danger at our very doors, and we are all the less disposed to experiment because Ireland itself has never ceased to tell us of her hatred for the British Empire.

### ENGLAND'S REAL DANGER.\*

IT is not very probable that anybody will be greatly alarmed by the publication in 1904 of General Kropatkin's scheme for the conquest of British India by Russia. Apart from the fact that Russia has her hands pretty well filled at this juncture, it must be remembered that the document published by the *Express* has very little practical importance. Such documents lie pigeon-holed in all the Chancelleries of Europe. Germany has her plans prepared for the invasion of Russia, of France, of Austria, of England. France, Russia, and Austria are all similarly provided. There are, no doubt, many defensive and offensive schemes ready to be put into action against Continental nations lying in the archives of our own War Office. The existence of these plans does not necessarily imply a design to carry them out either now or at any future time. In a very large degree they are platonic exercises, and their only real significance lies in the fact that they point to the existence of certain recognised potentialities. They refer to things which

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\* Written in July, 1904.

may happen, and that they indicate in some cases even a willingness and a desire to see them happen it would be quite childish to deny. The Russian plan for the seizure of India is by no means the work of a great strategist. It is made to look ridiculously easy on paper, and it is about as plausible as Captain Bobadil's proposal for the abolition of an enemy. The Ameer of Afghanistan and the Shah of Persia are to be won over by Russian gold, the natives of India are to be prompted to revolt against England, and a Muscovite force of one hundred and fifteen thousand men is to take the last hand in the rubber. Of course, everybody knows that Russia has for years been playing the part of Codlin against England's Short in Afghanistan and Persia, but the people of those countries are not so stupid or so ill-informed as to desire any exchange from English to Muscovite methods of government.

A document of even less real importance (as matters now stand, though it has a marked significance of its own) than General Kuropatkin's airy scheme of conquest has just been published in Germany. It appears in the form of a work of fiction, and it comes from the pen of August Niemann, who, according to the *Daily Mail*, is an officer of high standing and well known at the Court of Saxony. "In a word, he is a man well worth listening to, even though he puts his thoughts into the form of a novel." The book is called "The World War," and by way of sub-title it carries the words "German Dreams." The gist of the story is that France, Russia and Germany enter into a combination for the destruction of the power of Great Britain. At the close of the war the Kaiser, at the head of the allies, enters London and grants terms to the vanquished. Russia takes India, France takes

Egypt, Germany takes Antwerp, England pays a thumping indemnity, and sinks presumably to the level of a fifth-rate Power. One asks, naturally, why all this should happen. We are told by the author of the book that the German people "have long been exasperated by the intrigues and covetousness of England," and we learn that the deepest and most powerful feeling in the breast of man is that of righteousness. This sense of righteousness has been profoundly wounded by England's policy. We are so intolerably wicked that nothing can satisfy the outraged moral feeling of Russia, for example, but to have us incontinently wiped out. In Germany "it needs only one word from the Kaiser to stir the soul of the people to its deepest depths and to light a flame of overpowering enthusiasm." France is to forget her ancient animosities and her ravished Rhine provinces for the sake of Egypt, and Germany's sense of righteousness is to be satisfied by the incorporation of Belgium. This precious programme is, of course, inspired wholly and solely by a desire for the restoration of the liberties of the world. The dreamer of these "German Dreams" knows how much more enviable the social condition of India would become under Russian rule than it has been under the British Raj, how much more prosperous Egypt would have grown if it had passed the last twenty years solely under the rule of France, and how Belgium longs to find itself under the iron militarism of Germany.

We are not free of the vice of cant in England, but I do not remember to have encountered any native sample quite as flagrant as that just cited. If Russia is to supersede Great Britain in India in the name of righteousness, then let the Devil take command of human destinies at once and for ever in the same great

name ! We are hardly to believe, I suppose, that the German people is to be deceived by this mendacious Pecksniffery. Say frankly that the German people hate us ; say that they prayed openly to see us drown in our late life-struggle in South Africa, and that they yearningly desire our downfall now ; let us own all this and shrug an easy-going shoulder at it, as a thing not greatly to be cared for and to be placidly endured ; but we are fully aware that their rancour springs from no other impulse than one of greed and envy. We have no quarrel with the Germans, and no desire to pick a cause of quarrel, and not the faintest little fear of the result of any quarrel they may succeed in thrusting upon us. The "German Dreams" are in themselves as foolish as the dreams of ignorance made drunk. Whatever else may be the result of the war lately raging in the Far East, it is sure that Russia for a generation to come will not be fit to join in an offensive coalition against Great Britain. France is our friend, and is growing more friendly day by day. Germany is left to gnash her teeth alone. We have never done her wrong. We have never wished her ill. It is not our fault that she has made a ghastly failure of her attempt to colonise. We have made no sort of protest against the increase of her naval armaments, though it is manifestly directed against ourselves and cannot conceivably have any other aim. We have heard some blatant talk about her of late days as the Ruler of the North Sea. It is to be hoped that the nations will grow too wise to put the matter to the test, but England should at least know enough to be upon her guard.

Rightly to understand the attitude of the swash-bucklering idiot who would set the world on fire to hatch his egg of German supremacy, let us imagine

an English officer of high standing writing and publishing a book to advocate the coalition of a body of the Powers for the extermination of Germany, offering the crusade in the name of humanity, and declaring that our King had but to speak a word to light a flame of overpowering enthusiasm in favour of the scheme. How long does any sane Englishman suppose that such a man would be allowed to retain his commission ? But the publication in this country by any person of standing of a work wantonly advocating war upon a nation with whom we have no shadow of a diplomatic quarrel is practically unthinkable, and it would not be easy to conceive an act of greater folly or wickedness. "One word from the Kaiser and the whole nation would spring to arms !" Is it so, indeed ? And if it be so, are we acting very wisely in throwing open the very heart of our naval defences to the inspection of the German fleet ? Are we very wise in familiarising them with our waterways, in allowing them to photograph our positions and our defensive mechanisms, and to make record of all those things which they, on their own side, guard in jealous secrecy ? Any foreigner is liable to arrest in Germany on the bare suspicion that he is making memoranda in the neighbourhood of a fortified place. Either they or we must be acting absurdly. Either the elaborate precaution is silly, or the "look-where-you-please" attitude is criminal.

The Berlin Press "lays stress," so says Reuter, "on the coolness of the British towards Germany." Now, is it not surprising that when a nation has been foaming at the mouth against us for a year or two ; when its official head has given open sympathy to our enemies ; when its Press has spread broadcast the vilest and most unfounded slanders on the honour

of our troops ; when a *persona grata* at one of her Courts is permitted publicly to advocate our destruction—is it not surprising that we should be cool towards her ? Would it be less surprising if we were hot—white hot ? There is no other Great Power in the world which would have endured such a campaign of calumny as has so long been waged against us. It is well, alike for ourselves and for Germany, that we can afford to be cool. War is a game in which even the victor pays too dearly for success, and the man who advocates a war of wanton aggression is at once a villain and a fool. Englishmen may protest against such an advocacy, even when it is directed against themselves, with a perfectly single mind. A crippled Russia and a friendly France make the venomous “ dreams ” of the German jingo as vain as the imaginations of a child. It is significant, on the other side of the question, to notice that there has been a formal acceptance between Great Britain and Germany of the principle of arbitration in respect to all matters of dispute in which national honour is not involved. One of the surest ways to avoid great disputes is to provide for the peaceful settlement of small ones.

But although we can afford to ignore the nonsense-puzzle of General Kuropatkin, and the vacant rage of the author of “ German Dreams,” there is one genuine danger confronting Great Britain at this moment to which the attention of all well-wishers of their country should be directed. There is one respect in which the recent growth of the German Navy is of especial interest to England, for this country has aided its advancement, albeit half unconsciously, in a very large degree. It is to Great Britain that Germany owes the existence of a Naval Reserve on which she can draw to the complete satisfaction of all her require-

ments. It is an extraordinary fact that more than half the men employed in English mercantile bottoms are Germans. We enlist from many other countries for our merchant service. Sir Howard Vincent, for instance, has had brought under his notice the composition of the crew of an English vessel which suggests that an appropriate name for her would have been *The Tower of Babel*. All told, her hands numbered twenty-seven, and of these six were German, three were Dutch, seven Belgian, three Greek, two Swedish, two French, one Danish, one Austrian, one Italian, and one Spanish. We experience great difficulty in the maintenance of an efficient reserve, and this is not to be wondered at where we see the British seaman everywhere ousted from his employment in favour of the foreigner. There is room, so we are told on the authority of Mr. A. G. Cowie, author of "The Sea Services of the Empire as a Field for Employment," for the annual enlistment of fifteen thousand British boys in our mercantile marine. The basis of the calculation is that we employ in all a quarter of a million men in our sea-going trade, and that two hundred thousand of these should by all right be men of British birth. The odd fifty thousand would be made up of Lascars, natives of our possessions. It is evident that a very great improvement will have to take place in the treatment of our seamen if the hope of securing a universally British service is to be fulfilled. Foreigners are to be found in plenty who will endure the miseries and indignities of fo'c'sle life against which Englishmen rebel. But all the same, we are enriching the naval service of our most aggressive rival whilst we are yearly impoverishing our own, and the problem presented is one of the most difficult and serious with which this country has to deal.

There is another question of parallel interest and almost equal moment to the national safety which could be instantly dealt with if Parliament could be brought to devote to it only a little of the energy it expends on things which in comparison are of no more importance than a pebble beside a pyramid. This is the only maritime country on the face of the earth which grants certificates to foreign pilots. The result is that there is not one of our waterways which is not known as familiarly to all the world as it is to ourselves. At the twentieth annual conference of the United Kingdom Pilots' Association, Commander George Cawley, of the Royal Naval Reserve, said certain memorable things. He pointed out that it will not be until we are at war with some Continental Power that we shall realise the full effect of allowing Continental seamen to hold certificates which enable them without restriction to conduct their own ships in our territorial waterways. "Are we not," Commander Cawley asks, "knowingly making a scourge with which the alien will chastise us whenever the opportunity offers?" In 1888 our Admiralty had this question brought before them, and did not then think it of sufficient importance to be dealt with. Since that day the number of foreigners owning certificates which entitle them to act as pilots in British waters has increased by two hundred per cent., and it is worth while to notice how little Germany shares our scorn for the privilege extended. There is no better way to promotion in the Naval Reserve of that country than for an officer to familiarise himself with the channels of the Humber and the Thames, and to have his British certificate to show as a proof of his acquirements.

## HOME RULE FOR INDIA.

IN a recent leading article of the *Tribune* it was averred that it was many a year since the Indian National Congress had opened with an address "so reasonable and yet so resolute" as that delivered on the previous day by Mr. Naoroji at Calcutta. In the course of that address Mr. Naoroji cited Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. John Morley as having expressed their "adherence to the principle of self-government," which, unless it was a most impertinent and unmeaning reference, signified an adherence to the principle of self-government as applied to India. A recognised organ of Liberal opinion, by no means immoderate in its views as Liberalism goes nowadays, finds Mr. Naoroji "reasonable," and describes his address as "the voice of an old man invoked to calm the extremists of the younger generation." We may take it, therefore, that in the speech in question we are confronted with the irreducible minimum of the claims of Young India, and we may assume further that when the orator appeals to his audience to "trust in the sincerity of the Liberal revival" he looks with confidence to the present Government to grant what India is asking. India, of course, is here understood to signify at the outside a ten-thousandth portion of the inhabitants of the great peninsula. The rest of India is to be taught to ask for all for which the ten-thousandth fraction is now asking, and the crusade will enjoy the favour and encouragement of the India Office.

This being the position, it is worth while to look carefully at the demands which are being made. They are that the administration in all services, departments, and details shall be in the hands of the people of India ; that all legislation, taxation, and power of expenditure shall be vested in the people of India ; that whatever money India may find towards expenditure in any department—civil, military, or naval—shall yield salaries, emoluments, pensions, etc., to Indians alone. These claims are not to be disposed of by the simple assertion that they are equivalent to a demand for the evacuation of India by Great Britain. That is precisely what they amount to, but if right, justice, humanity, and the cause of freedom call for them, they will of necessity be taken into consideration by a Government which lives only to forward those sublime ideals. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum!* The *Tribune* finds the proposals “ reasonable.” It argues that Mr. Morley went to the India Office, as Mr. Chamberlain went to the Colonial Office, because he had the wisdom to see there an immense opportunity for the exercise of the highest statesmanship. “ A great Liberal ”—so runs the pronouncement—“ a great Liberal would seek such an opportunity only because he believed that the time had come for lightening the burden of militarism, extending the opportunities for education, and laying the foundations of a sure structure of self-government.”

Now, it appears to me that it behoves us to ask ourselves for what purposes we maintain our rule in India. Are we exploiting a subject people for our own gain, or are we striving to do our duty by those great millions whom events—over which living England had no control—long since committed to our charge ? Are we moved by greed and tyranny, or

are we acting under a sense of obligation? When the "reasonable" demands of Mr. Naoroji have all been conceded, will the land be more justly governed, more efficiently administered, more tranquil within its own borders, safer from assault from without? What, in short, are the tangible advantages to be reaped by the people of India from the proposed reconstruction of the governmental system? It may be admitted that the present administration is not perfect. We are told that it will remain imperfect until the burden of taxation is lightened, the executive separated from the judicial service, and "the police civilised to a level which no longer admits, for example, of the rather frequent use of torture." It is proposed to democratise India, then, in order that, amongst other things, the burden of taxation may be lightened. The mere fact that all experience shows democracy to be increasingly costly to the taxpayer—the fact that our own national expenditure has grown with the growth of popular representation—seems unworthy of consideration here. The one thing which will not be effected by the substitution of Native for British rule is the lightening of the burden of taxation. That the police are addicted to the rather frequent use of torture is a very curious argument to employ in favour even of the partial abolition of European control. Are we to suppose that the rather frequent use of torture is in any degree a result of British domination, and that, if Mr. Naoroji's "reasonable" proposals were accepted, it would begin to cease out of the land?

Of course, the writer in the *Tribune* knows in his own mind that a native administration will not be cheaper than that which is conducted by a British executive, and he most assuredly does not believe

that the rather frequent use of torture would become less frequent amongst the police as a result of the substitution of an Oriental for an Englishman. It is probable that he would repudiate the latter suggestion with some heat, but it unfortunately happens that he offers it amongst the arguments in favour of Mr. Naoroji's proposals. So far as it may be said to have any relation to the question at all, it tells on the opposite side to that for which it seems intended. A reason assigned for the disaffection of India is that she has seen China promised a Parliament, and a Parliament conferred upon Persia. She has seen an autocracy broken in Russia, which is practically an Asiatic Power, and all these things have helped to disturb the equilibrium and to excite the hopes of the younger and more enthusiastic amongst the intending reformers. This may very well be so, but it does not in any degree affect the position as between the governed and the governing bodies in India. The cases are in no respect similar. The granting of a Parliament to China or to Persia is a purely domestic matter, in which China or Persia is alone concerned. Russia may be practically an Asiatic Power, but the breaking up of an autocracy within her borders has no likeness to a revolt against a rule which has in it no one of the elements which made that autocracy hateful. There is no arbitrary arrest, no flogging without trial, no Siberia, no wholesale slaughter. Young India reads the English papers, and is no doubt encouraged to learn that an English writer finds a justification for its hopes in events which have no earthly thing to do with them.

As matters stand—and it can serve no good purpose to close our eyes to the truth—Great Britain in India occupies a conquered country. It may be now

advisable, or it may become advisable in the course of time, to try to lose sight of that fact. The further away from the idea we can get on both sides the better it will ultimately be for all concerned, but the process of retreat will have to be gradual. Mr. Naoroji claims that the Indian is a British subject with all the rights and privileges of a citizen of empire. Now, quite conceivably he ought to be. It is very much to be desired that he one day should be. There could be no better destiny for him than to become fit to control his own fate in friendly union with a great Western Power, and it is one of England's most sacred duties to help him in that direction. But it is an utter fallacy to pretend that he is now in the position to which he is aspiring with much noise and tumult and the spilling of much seditious ink.

No educated Indian, we are told, can be expected to admit that the people of India are incapable of self-government unless he is prepared also to admit their hopeless and permanent inferiority to Western races. We need not ask the educated Indian to admit the incapacity of his countrymen, but we may without offence suggest a present unfitness. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman offers as an axiom the creed that "Good government can never be a substitute for government by the people themselves." But surely we are not asked to suppose that this means that, irrespective of surrounding conditions, self-government is at once to be bestowed upon all peoples. Hardly anybody seems to think it worth while to remember that popular representative government is even now in the experimental stage. Nobody can say with certainty whither it is leading us, and it is beyond dispute that it has its dangerous side. The English experiment is not yet forty years old. When it was made

it was described as a leap in the dark, and we are as yet very far from having landed. We have arrived in sight of many things of which we did not dream when the leap was made, and our destination is still uncertain. It is altogether too early to assume that we have found an ideal form of government. The proletariat has not yet got fairly to work, and already it is full of menace.

The first step towards self-government in India is to be a free compulsory education, and Mr. Naoroji is careful to impress upon his hearers that they must not take the question of expense into their consideration. He warns them that it will be a costly business, and that they must be prepared to endure a considerable burden. This does not seem to fit in very well with the cry of Mr. Naoroji's backer in the *Tribune* for a decrease of taxation, but you cannot have the thing both ways. There has in these late days been a considerable amount of trouble about the feeding of hungry children in the Board Schools of wealthy England, and it has been demonstrated to the general satisfaction that it is useless to expect good brainwork from little boys and girls whose stomachs are empty. There is in India a population seven or eight times larger than our own, and the percentage of empty stomachs is vastly higher than it is in England. The British taxpayer and ratepayer is far from easy in the contemplation of the additional burden which will be laid upon his shoulders by the free feeding of the children of the poor. Free schools, which shall be adequate to the education of the children of a populace of three hundred millions, can only be erected at an enormous expenditure. They cannot be staffed except at a prodigious initial cost, nor maintained except at a vast annual outlay. Where is the money

to come from? For Mr. Naoroji to advocate such a scheme as this in the same breath in which he demands a reduction in taxation is to stultify himself.

It is not in the mind of Great Britain to surrender India, and the acceptance of the "reasonable" proposals of Lord Salisbury's "black man" would amount to nothing more or less. The Indian National Congress asks the British Raj to clear out, and to make room for the Native administrator. The demand—presented in so many words—is that "administration in all services, departments, and details shall be in the hands of the people of India." It is pretty obvious that no service, department, or detail can remain under the control of the present governors of the country. The British Empire has received its marching orders from the mouthpiece of Young India, the experienced, grave old constitutionalist who has been "invoked to calm the extremists of the younger generation." It is enough to make a cat laugh. But it begins to be serious when one of the leading organs of moderate Liberalism in England deals with a grave face with an absurdity so monstrous.

In our dealings with India as great a responsibility lies upon us as ever was laid upon an Empire since the world began. To retire from it would be an act of national poltroonery. It is ours—at least, it may be ours, and ought to be ours—to hold in check racial animosities, to afforest great regions which have gone desert through long neglect, to irrigate vast tracts which have grown barren in a worn-out land, to mete out even-handed justice, to uplift a fallen civilisation. These things we have done, and do loyally strive to do unto this day. There is no question but that we have done and are doing these duties in an infinitely better fashion than they could possibly be performed

by any popularly elected Native body which will be inspired by Young India for many a generation yet to come. The English rule in India has not been an unmixed blessing to the Native populace. No government was ever an unmixed blessing anywhere. But, on the whole, it has been just and generous and high-minded, and no subject race was ever so entirely unexploited for the conqueror's advantage. There are two reasons for which England must retain her hold on India, and they are not less real because it may be made to appear something of a paradox to advance them side by side. The one is wholly selfish. The other is wholly unselfish. It is at once a question of self-preservation and a question of duty.

The theory on which it becomes possible for any English politician to look with complacency on these outrageously impossible proposals is that in popular representation we have discovered a nostrum for the cure of all social ills. All we know of the effects of that nostrum we have learned in the last nine-and-thirty years, but all men who care really to observe the signs of their time are now beginning to see that we have set a force in action which it is beyond our power to arrest. We have surrendered ourselves, horse, foot, and artillery, and into what bondage we may be carried by an uninstructed democracy we cannot as yet divine. It is not altogether out of reason to hope that the English Demos may permit himself to be counselled and advised, and that the ardours of his haste may be mitigated. But an Indian Demos ! The Ryot at the polling-booth and the seditious Babu at the hustings ? That is a condition of things we cannot bring ourselves to endure, either for India's sake or for our own.

## ENGLAND'S DUTY TO HER COLONIES.

THE game of Party has not been played to poorer effect for many years than it has been by those who are striving to foment a quarrel as to the nature of the rights and duties of the Imperial Parliament with respect to the internal affairs of our Colonies. The rule which ought to govern action is quite simple, and may be simply and briefly stated. When any movement is made by a Colonial Legislature which involves the British Government, the Imperial Parliament has a right to a voice in its affairs. A Colony may not do anything without the consent of the Home authorities for which the Home taxpayer will have to pay. It may not, without our sanction, take steps which are likely to result in war, nor may it do anything without leave which will, in the opinion of our own rulers, involve this country in a disagreement with native races. Put in the tersest terms, the rule is that the side which pays the piper calls the tune. That is a principle to which no colonist objects in the abstract, though he may sometimes fail to recognise it in action, as he appears to have done in respect to the recent executions in Natal. But it ought to be just as clearly understood on the other hand that where British interests are not directly affected the Colonies have an entire right to act as they think best for their own interests. It is no business of ours to criticise or control their actions unless they are of a nature to affect ourselves. If Australia, for example, chooses to legalise marriage

with a deceased wife's sister it is properly no concern of ours. The Colonies rightly resent our veto in matters of this nature.

In the handling of the question which was recently discussed with quite needless acrimony in the House of Commons one side, in its anxiety to defend the Government, wholly lost sight of the indubitable rights of the Colonists, while the other, in its anxiety to trip the Ministry by the heels, was equally oblivious of the rights of the Mother Country. One extremist was ready to see the Empire dismembered rather than submit to the "judicial murder" of a dozen negroes, who, as a mere matter of fact, had themselves been found guilty of murder on evidence which is not disputed. It needs scarcely to be said that this gentleman represented that not very considerable body of Englishmen to whom the spirit of fair-play for the enemy is so dear that they are compelled to the assumption that when an Englishman quarrels with a foreigner he is invariably in the wrong. But there was not a whit more reason to be found amongst those members of the Opposition who upheld the doctrine that the Government, in delaying the executions for inquiry, had gravely and even grossly infringed on the liberties of a free people. Here are two sets of disputants, each armed with half a truth, and each believing, or pretending to believe, that the half is the whole. The Opposition—seeking, as Oppositions always do, to embarrass the Government—denies an essential Constitutional principle, and the more vehement of the Government's supporters are loud in pushing what they suppose to be the principle so far that not one of our great self-governing dependencies would accept it for an hour.

I am not pledged indiscriminately to defend or to assail any one of the Parties which are concerned for their own special interests, and the partisan aspect of this squabble touches me personally not at all. It is not an unheard-of thing that people with whom I generally disagree should occasionally blunder into rectitude, or that they should even do the right thing with their eyes open. This shindy, such as it was, is now over, and it would not be worth while to consider it if it were not for the fact that it has emphasised the existence of a real danger. Just so long as there exists a body of opinion in England by virtue of which any school of politicians look on our Colonies as being still in leading-strings there will be friction between them and ourselves. To a certain pragmatical kind of man it is impossible to conceive that the native Australian, Canadian, New Zealander, or South African of British blood is just as proud of Australia or Canada, of New Zealand or Natal as any native-born Britisher is of his own land, and loves his country just as fondly. He reckons himself to the full as good a man as even a Cockney. He is sometimes over-sensitive on this point, and it is by no means unnatural that he should be so whilst he finds himself lectured and patronised, and treated generally as if he were barely fit for the control of his own affairs.

There were several speeches delivered in this unfortunate and wholly unnecessary debate which will rankle in the minds of British South Africans for years. There have been articles in some of the newspapers—journals of acknowledged rank—which will be quoted as expressing the opinions of England as to the cruelty, the rapacity, and callous greed with which the native races are treated by their supposed

subsidiary rulers—diatribes which call with passion on the people and the Government of this country to protest against a great and crying evil. The men who are thus impeached by speakers and writers of their own blood are not likely to take all this high-falutin nonsense kindly. They resent it bitterly. The Englishmen and descendants of Englishmen who have to deal with native races are compelled to know many things which are hidden from the facile moralist who lives in England and discourses from Westminster, Exeter Hall, and Little Bethel. The half-subjugated savage has some of the characteristics of Mr. Brunton Stevens's Chinese cook, of whom it was written that "he was dirty, he was lazy, he was cheeky, he was sly." The *Daily News*, in an article of noble tone, rebukes the Natal Government for its attempt to extract a poll-tax from the niggers and for the measures taken to enforce the tax. The whole policy has been to dragoon the aborigines into labour. So be it. But what does the *Daily News* want? Does it venture to propose that the white settlers should do the only thing which would allow its programme to be carried out? That would be to leave the natives absolutely without control, or subject only to such moral influences as they might be found susceptible to.

There is a point of view from which it would be for the better if all European races trekked right out of Africa, and returned the noble savage to his natural devices. There was, on the whole, so says the humanitarian, less of squalor and of savagery unredeemed amongst the black people in their natural state than there is now we have taken to them ardent spirits, and the primeval curse of labour, and that diabolic gospel of money-getting, through which their souls and bodies are ruthlessly exploited. Clearly

there the humanitarian of this school allows that we have done a very little good. We have put an end to some carnivals of heathendom which were sickening for civilised man to think of, and here and there we have streaked the natural ebony with a touch of the whitewash of civilisation. But on the whole—we are still engaged with our humanitarian—the savage is not less a savage, and in many ways we have debased him. We have intruded ourselves where we had no right but that of the strongest and most cunning ; and whilst we have carried with us many of the worst aspects of that strange welter of sin and folly which we call our civilisation, we have left its few compensating phases behind us so far as the aboriginal is concerned.

It would be futile to deny the truth of this. But I return to my question. What does the humanitarian want ? The European races simply *won't* trek out of South Africa, and could not if they would. The noble savage of the lakes and plains of the great West had a good deal better time of it before the big canoes of the palefaces sailed from the region of the rising sun. Perhaps the Maoris are the only race which has been found capable of assimilating the better characteristics of the white invader. We look elsewhere, and, if we are honest men, we admit that in most places our presence in the wild has brought something of a curse to its primal inhabitants. Well, the Romans did the same thing for the aborigines of England, but they left a something behind them with the aid of which the Saxon rose to a rude growth of manhood. And the Normans did a prodigious deal of mischief to Saxon interests—impounded lands, enslaved free men, bullied, hectored, murdered, pillaged ; were guilty of conduct which would have

found the pulpit in texts for a century of Sundays. And now for hundreds of years this England of ours, crusted with faults as she is, and smeared with the slime of many basenesses, has been in the main the most ennobling influence the world has yet seen. She has been the one voice of Europe speaking for freedom and justice. And that is how God works, moulding good out of evil. You shall have your way in silence if you choose to say that evolution and the blind survival of the fittest are answerable for it all, except that one must urge that it has something of a look of design, moving, as it does, everywhere, and always, and inexorably, towards an end which the student of history finds brought visibly nearer with the progress of every century.

The man who asks me if I justify the alleged wrong-doing of the Natal Government on these grounds does his intelligence a poor service in thus advertising it. I say only that in all ages the earlier struggles of barbarism against forces more skilled and less barbarous have been fraught with consequences to the weaker side which in the earlier stages of conquest have looked altogether malevolent, though in the long run they have resulted in a development towards righteousness. History does not show a solitary example to the contrary, either in respect to the initial harm or the ultimate benefit. But to tackle the charge which has been brought against the Natal Government on its merits, I can honestly say that I fail to find a wrong involved in the idea that the idle savage should be told that he has to labour or to pay for the privilege of being lazy. But the *Daily News* will have it that coercion has been employed in a form so brutal that it justifies its own sneer at the word "murder" as applied to the killing of the police agents who were

employed to carry it out. Once more—what is asked for? Is the South African negro to be left absolutely where he now is, except for such mission work as we can bring to bear upon him? Is it a crime to make him work at all? Or if it is advisable, upon the whole, that he should be taught that he can be of some sort of use, what means are to be employed to induce him to become a productive citizen?

Those who have to deal daily with the South African native, whether in his corporate or individual aspect, do very probably know more of him than those of us who have always lived at home, and understand better how to deal with him. The ordinary untravelled citizen who takes the trouble to read more than one newspaper, and who takes an average interest in the affairs of the world, cannot fail to know that the sway of the white man over the feebler folk of the world is nowhere so generally marked by its freedom from cruelty as it is where men of British blood are in authority. There have been excesses—excesses of a very lamentable sort—in plenty. But there is no instance of the wanton exercise of cruelty on the part of any Colonial Administration conducted by British men, and it is the assumption of their stay-at-home censors that they are less moral than other corporate bodies who are charged with duties like their own which has been so exasperatingly wounding to their proper pride. They are compelled to police their native population. They are compelled occasionally to measures of severity. But no open-minded man can deny that the humanity of their rule "sticks fiery-off indeed" when compared with the treatment offered to the natives by other European peoples in South Africa. And to argue in this way is not to justify one set of excesses by contrasting it with others

more violent. It is simply to indicate that some degree of severity is recognised everywhere as necessary, and that the British severities are almost out of comparison the mildest and the best controlled.

Almost first amongst the duties which are owed by the men of Great Britain to our Colonies is to refrain from an impertinent intermeddling with affairs which are peculiarly their own. A public man can do more harm in ten minutes by unguarded speech than can be undone in as many years. The "perish India!" breed of politician—the men who are ready to throw an Empire out of gear, if they are not allowed to feed their own particular maggot—are a real danger. The average Englishman is too lenient towards them, because, as a rule, he is ignorant of the depth and extent of the ill-feeling they create. It is not altogether a pleasing thing to acknowledge, but it is true that amongst the Colonies of this country there is an *esprit de corps* which is directed against the Mother Land, just as there is an *esprit de corps* which displays itself in goodwill towards us. Touch the rights, privileges, or good name of one, and you threaten or impugn them all. Australasia and Canada make common cause with South Africa. Happily the Government stands acquitted on the charge of having intruded on the rights of the Executive of Natal, but the fact that Ministers resigned in a body on the mere suspicion of it is a matter for those disciples of Chadband who are so ready to give their moral superiority a public airing to lay to heart.

## THE DANGERS OF PREACHING PEACE.

IT is a noteworthy fact that the approach of the Hague Conference excited in the minds of many Continental statesmen and journalists a feeling rather of anxiety and unrest than of hope for the cause of Peace. Germany was frankly hostile to the discussion of any proposal for the limitation of armaments. No nation dared venture to set an example to the rest of the world, and so long as any one of the great Powers was unwilling to look at the question there could be no hope of progress. According to the manifesto issued by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman in the first issue of the new Liberal organ, the *Nation*, the British Government was friendly to the suggestion, and the Premier even alleged that "we have already given earnest of our sincerity by the considerable reductions that have been effected in our naval and military expenditure." But rival nations have been quick to observe that whilst our Government claims to have made reductions in expenditure it claims also that it is making our fighting machinery more effective, and some even of its customary supporters have exposed the fallacy. It is not a very convincing "earnest of sincerity" in the cause of peace to get ready to strike harder whilst professing to disarm, and the reputation of English statecraft for good faith will not be increased by these mutually destructive pretences. Sir Henry did not believe that "our preponderant naval position" would be called in question. He was "persuaded that throughout the world that power is recognised as non-

aggressive . . . and that it is, therefore, a mistake to imagine that the Naval Powers will be disposed to regard our position on the sea as a bar to any proposal for the arrest of armaments."

As a pendant to this opinion the warning to England which was recently issued by the *Neue Politische Correspondenz* of Berlin made interesting reading. We were told there in so many words that we should do well not to provoke too heatedly the world-historic discussion as to whom supremacy in Europe belonged. We can afford to disregard the consideration that so far as Germany is concerned that "world-historic" question cannot by any stretch of fancy have come into being before the creation of the German Empire, an event which was completed by the coronation of the present Kaiser's grandfather six-and-thirty years ago. But we cannot afford to disregard the fact that a new world-force has been developed, and that its energies continually threaten to be directed against ourselves. The position is one of constant difficulty and delicacy, and it was not likely to be made less difficult by the then approaching Conference, the extraordinary thing about which was that, whilst it was supposed to be convened in the interests of Peace, it would occupy itself—and probably occupy itself exclusively—in a further adjustment of the Rules of War. It was perfectly clear that a strenuous effort was to be made to minimise the effect of Great Britain's naval preponderance; and, since it was equally clear that this country could not safely consent to such an arrangement, it was not easy to see how the cause of Peace was to be forwarded by discussion.

To have described the then approaching gathering at The Hague as a Peace Conference was about as reason-

able as it would be to suggest that the rules which govern any one of our popular amusements are drawn up with the design to prevent the game from being played. The fact was that we did not deal honestly with ourselves in this matter. "We are going to rest in the future as in the past on the two-Power standard," Lord Tweedmouth had recently said at Oxford. He believed that armaments should be reduced, but the Navy must be kept efficient for the purpose for which it is required. This means that so long as the *status quo* is preserved we are willing to save money, if our rivals will permit us to do so. But it is precisely because the *status quo* is not satisfactory to at least one of our great rivals that a constant and increasing effort is being made to change it. Germany is not content that England should be equal to herself and any possible ally in combination. It is the proportion of strength with which she is dissatisfied, and with which she must continue to be dissatisfied, so long as she nurtures her present ambitions, whether the figures on either side go up or down. She aims at nothing less than supremacy in Europe. That is not to say that she is necessarily bent upon aggression, in spite of a somewhat too frequent menace, but it is her purpose to make herself as impregnable on the seas as she conceives herself to be already on land, and all the Peace Conferences in the world will not divert her from that end.

The suggested limitation of armaments would bring us no nearer to the goal of peace so long as the present proportions are preserved, and it is, of course, wholly idle to imagine that any Power will consent to change those proportions to its own disadvantage. From an economic point of view it is everywhere to be desired, but so long as the world at large is content to rest

inactive whilst one nation makes war upon another it is impossible of attainment. At present the efforts of statesmen are confined to the attempt to limit the zone of an international conflagration ; and the idea of putting it out, or of preventing it by any more effective means than begging it politely not to burn, has not yet been entertained by any committee of the nations. If it were once understood that no Power would be allowed to declare war upon another without having first submitted its grievance to a court of arbitration, and that any breach of this rule would at once be punished, we might see an end to bloodshed. Lord Charles Beresford has said that battleships are cheaper than battles ; but an International Police would be cheaper than our bloated navies, and one of its earliest results would be to bring about a cessation of the increase in the armed forces of the world.

M. Dupuy, the ex-Premier of France, hit the nail of difficulty on the head. Rival Powers cannot be expected to regard as permanent the naval and military advantages which others have acquired. Until the poet's dream is realised and the common sense of all is used to hold a fretful realm in awe, greed and jealousy and honest misunderstanding will hurry the nations into conflict, and the certainty of uncertainty as to the hour at which diplomatic complications may arise will lead them to strain every nerve to be in readiness for war even when all the auguries of peace are at their brightest. Each Power feels that its only guarantee of safety is its strength, whilst it realises the fact that the preponderant strength of its neighbour is a danger. There is only one way out of the difficulty, and that way lies in the formation of an International Court of Law, which

shall arm itself with power to enforce its decisions. In most civilised countries it is regarded as a crime that a man should take the law into his own hands, and that which is good reason for the individual is reason no less good for a community. We shall have a Peace Conference which is worthy of its name when we have a Conference which is empowered to discuss the conditions under which wars can be prevented, and not before. So long as we meet only to decide on the rules under which the horrible game shall be played we can come no nearer to that which we profess to be our purpose.

We are as yet miles and miles away from a rational popular conception of the duty which lies before us, but it is not less the urgent duty of those who believe that the greatest of the scourges of the world can be abolished, and that the means for its abolition are in sight, to keep on pegging at the question whenever opportunity offers. There never was a war yet in the history of the world in which both sides were in the right, and in most of those recorded by history it is obvious to the disinterested student that one has been monstrously in the wrong. It has happened often that conquest has resulted in ultimate benefit to the conquered ; but this excuse for war grows rarer and more rare as the world comes more completely under the domination of a civilisation which everywhere approaches to an equality.

England, the United States, Japan, and Italy are at one in the desire to arrive at some means of checking the increase of the burden which weighs so heavily upon the world. They are willing to discuss the means by which it is thought possible to arrive at this consummation ; but France and Russia are doubtful as to the advisability even of discussion, and Germany

and Austria are actually opposed to it. But there is nothing in the world more certain than that it is within the power of the four nations who are friendly to the proposal to take a step immensely in advance of it. With no sacrifice of national dignity they could each pledge themselves to engage in no offensive operations against another Power without the assent of all, and could invite their rivals to enter into a similar compact. The right of any nation to defend itself from assault could never for a moment be brought in question, but the necessity for a declaration of war might well be left to the consideration of a friendly tribunal. It would be understood that any nation which refused to enter into such a compact preferred at its own will to disregard the conscience of the world. To take a case in point. It is the opinion of many writers and public speakers in Germany at this moment—quite openly and unhesitatingly expressed—that England is somehow engaged in preparing a cause of war against herself by her interference with the legitimate schemes and aspirations of a country with which, for the time being, she is at peace. We are told that we are weaving around Germany a diplomatic net which already unpleasantly hampers the freedom of her movements, and that our continuance in such a course must sooner or later lead to a war which will be the beginning of the end for the British Empire.

Now, it needs no seer to tell us that talk of this kind is dangerous. It is less dangerous than it might be, if it were not accompanied by the statement that this country has brusquely repelled the friendship which Germany has offered to England “with more enthusiasm than statesmanlike wisdom.” England is profoundly unaware of having repelled the enthusiastic

offers of friendship which have been made by Germany, and on that very account is likely to treat the whole proclamation as a piece of journalistic *blague*. But the mischief is that it is widely taken for true upon the other side. A large section of the German public has undoubtedly brought itself to the belief that there exists towards her in England an active spirit of ill-will. It has happened before in the course of history that an often repeated accusation of that kind has created the enmity of which it has complained. Suppose a wave of popular anger to be created—here in England—by the insensate repetition of these unfounded charges! No man in his senses—no man who has a knowledge of history—will deny that it is possible to create such a wave of national antagonism in precisely such a way.

I take a hypothetical case, and I apply it to the imagined disadvantage of my own country—proved as the one land in which such a disturbance is least likely to occur. If there were as considerable a body of angry feeling in England against Germany as now exists in Germany against England we should find a reason for being at loggerheads in a day. Happily there is a broad base of national sanity here, and we do not readily fly off at the handle. But imagine us as being so stung by repeated challenge and threat that at last the populace loses its head and clamours for a close of these merely verbal hostilities and for a recourse to stronger weapons. Then how incalculably valuable to the cause of Peace would be the already recorded pledge of the Government that it would not strike unless the conscience of the world was with it—that it would not even threaten to strike unless the conscience of the world were with it! Such a popular *entêtement* as I have tried to indicate is

possible anywhere. Only a few years ago France was in an agony of imaginary pin-pricks. It is not from the historical point of view much longer since the indiscretion of an American Secretary of State was peacefully foiled by the impassivity of a British Ministry. The danger is for ever present, and the world has a right to some protection against it.

### THE WRECKERS OF EMPIRE.

IN the course of the last Parliamentary session (1907) it was proposed to deal with fourteen separate issues, each one affording matter for debate, and meriting at least a deliberate and careful examination, whilst three or four were of an interest so vital that the nation ought not to have been called upon to decide in respect to them until it had thoroughly familiarised itself with their purport and had made up its mind as to the effect of the legislative action proposed. First in order of arrangement came the proposal to curtail the powers of the House of Peers, and that politician who imagined this one question to be soluble in a single session was a curiously sanguine person. The question of Licensing Reform came next. It presented a problem as vexed and difficult as could easily be imagined, and into the *mélée* which must needs rage around it were drawn all the vested interests and all the various kinds of confiscationists, as well as all the cranks and faddists who have made the theme a weariness for years. It could be prophesied with certainty that no satisfactory solution could be arrived at in the course of a single session, and that any enactment which would result would create new difficulties which would call for new legislation. Next

we were brought face to face with two questions in which the actual solidity and permanence of the Empire were concerned. As to one of these that very limited section of the electorate which does its own thinking had been already tolerably well informed. As to the other, its *pros* and *cons* were known only to the experts, and an assembly until then plunged in profoundest ignorance was called upon to form and to express an opinion and to give that opinion an irrevocable shape in a space of time totally inadequate to its consideration. These two questions related to Home Rule in Ireland and to Home Rule in India.

The future historian, whose business it may very possibly be to trace the decline and fall of the British Empire, will have in any case to take especial note of the Session of 1907. It was, of course, conceivable that the melancholy forecast I have indicated might be belied, and that we might be entering upon an era of new ideals which, in their development, would put to shame the puny progress of the past. There were many ardent idealists who believed so, and no man has the right to brush the hopes of his fellows contemptuously aside. But one thing was certain. Of the four movements indicated three were fraught with the most serious consequences in one way or another—for good or for evil—and the conflict with the House of Peers, the bestowal of Home Rule on Ireland, and of an instalment of Home Rule on India must of necessity either weaken or strengthen us in so marked a degree that to press for a hasty decision was scarcely less than criminal. This consideration lends great force to that phrase of Lord Lansdowne in which he spoke of the choice between an unreformed House of Lords and an uncontrolled House of Commons. All thoughtful men are willing to submit to an aboli-

tion of the hereditary principle. No man who thinks at all is willing to witness the extinction of the advising and revising power which has a constitutional authority to demand the rehearing of a case which, in its opinion, has been imperfectly apprehended or has not been explicitly voted upon at all.

Everybody knows—and even the maddest partisan of the policy of hurry-skurry cannot deny—that the verdict of Philip drunk is being constantly reversed, tacitly or explicitly, by the judgment of Philip sober. Rightly or wrongly—and the rightness or wrongness of the decision has no bearing on the present point—one of the most powerful Governments of modern times, with a man of genius and great resource at its head, went to ruin on the Irish Home Rule issue. The Electorate killed the Gladstonian Government on one of the issues on which a Cabinet without a solitary commanding personality sought in 1907 to impose its unrestricted will upon the people. The contention was that the popular will had changed. There were some of us who did not believe that the popular will had changed, but even if—on the appeal we asked for—it should be proved that the change had taken place, the only logical deduction was that the popular will was changeable. The wind that blew anathema against the giant wafts the dwarf to a safe harbour. This is a fact—if it be a fact at all—which proves that the wind can veer, but it proves by no means the duty of flying before it in whatever direction it may blow. The theory of the present Cabinet is that its duty consists in giving, as far as possible, a permanent form to the fickle and momentary impulses of the crowd, and that any attempt to persuade the crowd to reconsider its opinion is an infringement on its liberties.

The announcement made in the King's Speech with regard to India read mildly enough, but the Congress then recently held in Calcutta, and the comments on it which appeared in the Liberal Press, enabled us to put a true construction on it. The official statement was couched in these words : " In India, while firmly guarding the strength and unity of executive power unimpaired, I look forward to a steadfast effort to provide means of widening the base of peace, order, and good government among the vast native populations committed to my charge." Now this meant that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and Mr. John Morley had given in their adhesion to the principle of popular representation in India. Some sort of franchise was to be given to its people. It was perfectly well known that the men who are most active in the native movement were opposed to English rule. Their demands had been formulated in the most unmistakable terms, and in their most moderate shape they called for the transfer of all administrative power to native hands. They asked that " all legislation, taxation, and power of expenditure shall be vested in the people of India ; and that whatever money India may find towards expenditure in any department —civil, military, or naval—shall yield salaries, emoluments, pensions, etc., to Indians alone." That is a part of the programme towards the accomplishment of which those Indians on whom it was proposed to confer a form of representative government had addressed themselves without disguise. It is their avowed design to escape from British domination, and it is the avowed purpose of the Cabinet to place in their hands the means by which they may effect their purpose.

It is, of course, extremely natural that the educated

Babu should desire to have a share in such good things as are going, and to presume that he is in part influenced by that desire is by no means to impugn his patriotism. But the point best worth consideration is surely that of the nature of the existing administration and the probable character of the administration which will succeed it in the event of the principle of representative government being put into practical effect. Will the administration be juster, purer, less dilatory, and less costly to the populace of India than it now is? Is there any rational reason to suppose that the mass of the people will be made happier and more prosperous? It has to be borne in mind that not one person in ten thousand amidst the multifarious tribes of the great Peninsula has ever heard of representative government, and that the infinitesimal fraction of the population which is asking for it is almost entirely composed of those to whom its coming would probably mean—or in any case might mean—a share of the national loaves and fishes. “Young India” asks for the abolition of British officialdom, and it is by conferring some sort of franchise on Young India that the Cabinet propose to guard “the strength and unity of executive power unimpaired.” The actual method by which it is proposed to do this is not disclosed to the country, but it is superfluous to say that when it becomes known it will need to be examined with the utmost vigilance. It may appear that Mr. Morley has in mind a scheme so statesmanlike, so matured, and so guarded from all perceptible risk that opposition will vanish before it, but it is in the first degree essential that before it commits itself to a project so momentous the country should have ample time to understand it. The debates of a single session will not suffice for

this, and whatever the measure proposed may be, it will be necessary to secure the sanction of the Electorate before it can be presented to the Lords with any semblance of authority. There must be a mandate before the Peers can be called on to obey it, and in this instance at least a question of so vast an importance that it is impossible to exaggerate it is being intruded on the authority of the Cabinet alone.

It was a singular spectacle in the House of Lords when a constitutional monarch held out at the instance of the Third Estate of the Realm a transparently-veiled threat against the Second with the menaced institution as an audience. The absolute tranquillity of those concerned in this remarkable episode seemed to afford a testimonial to the temper of the threatened chamber. Etiquette demanded silence and a seeming of acquiescence in the presence of the King, but the tranquillity was no less evident in his absence. Perhaps the proverb which tells that "threatened men live long" may have been present to their lordships' minds.

### THE NATION'S NEEDS.\*

SEVERAL things have lately happened to instruct us with respect to the spirit in which the nation is disposed to regard the proposals of the Colonial Secretary. For years past the Liberal leaders have been spoiling for a fight. They have at last been provided with an issue on which a real campaign is possible—not an absurdity of the Little England type, which could enlist under its ragged

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\* Written in July, 1903.

banner only a few fanatics and cranks, whose half-hearted captains dictated operations from a politic distance in the rear, but a real good stand-up battle, in which every man who cares for England's welfare is bound to join. It happens, for the reason that Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are before the country only in the form of general suggestion, and are not yet particularised, that those who are preparing to oppose him have the air of being able to choose their own battle-ground. In the formation of the Free Food League they are taking up what is obviously their strongest position theoretically, although it may yet prove that they are fortifying a position which it is not intended to assail. We can only argue towards the nature of the coming proposals by what we know of the character of the man who is to offer them. All of us, friends and enemies alike, know very well that Mr. Chamberlain's mind is of a practical cast, and it is not very probable, to say the least, that he will approach the electorate with a scheme which is certain to be met with an immediate and final rebuff. He is the very last man in the world to cry for the moon. It would be the last ineptitude to ask the working classes to vote for their own impoverishment, yet it is against a proposal of that nature that the Free-Food League is formed.

A Chancellor of the Exchequer thinks in millions sterling, a millionaire may think in thousands, but the man who is well-to-do in the average sense is compelled to think in pounds, whilst the great majority of people must think in shillings or in pence, and there are some who are forced to think in terms of farthings, and to regulate their meagre purchases on that basis. There are not very many of the class last named who will cast a vote at the next General Elec-

tion, but the men who think in shillings and in pence make up the mass of the electorate. They are good citizens in the main, and they submit willingly enough to many burdens which press upon them incidentally, as it were, and in ways which they do not trouble to find out, but to submit to them a plain, uncompromising proposal that they shall voluntarily and permanently reduce the purchasing power of their own earnings is so manifestly hopeless that we may be quite sure that a practical statesman like Mr. Chamberlain has no such scheme as *that* in his pocket.

Before the battle actually joins it will be just as well to know actually what we are going to fight for and to survey the means by which the desired end is most likely to be achieved. The point which is set first and foremost in the Chamberlain scheme is the closer unification of the Empire, an aspiration which in itself, and irrespective of the means to be taken to secure it, is certain of universal approval. The events of the Transvaal War proved the existence of a definite union of sentiment. What is desired, then, can only be to conserve that sentiment and to secure its permanence by an identification of material interests, and this can only be done by methods which will add to the prosperity alike of the parts and of the whole. The *desideratum* as regards the Empire is, then, to form a scheme which shall be advantageous all round. No plan which reveals a conspicuous partiality will be acceptable to all. We are asking, in fact, for a family partnership which can only be real when it implies complete fair play. Now, it is as clear as daylight that at this immediate moment our Colonies are not prepared for the wholesale acceptance of any scheme yet devised<sup>or</sup> devisable, and that any step we may take must be provisional. We must be prepared to

make haste slowly, and we must proceed in such a way as not to involve either the Mother Country or the Colonies in costs. On the one side the Colonies will not do anything to imperil their infant manufactures, and on the other side the man at the ballot-box at home will certainly refuse to immolate himself and his children on the altar of Colonial prosperity. No cause was ever aided by the blinking of facts, and in the fight which lies before us we can only win by assailing the pregnable and not the impregnable positions.

To put the thing into the plainest English, we have to consider, not so much what we should like as what we can get. In the first place, we are all decided, fair-traders, free-traders, protectionists, and retaliators, on continuing to keep an open door to the Colonies. That is our one point of contact, and from it we radiate into our various degrees of difference. It is of no advantage to them so long as we hold a precisely similar attitude to the rest of the world, and it can only begin to be of service when we differentiate between the members of our own family and the foreigner. Our Colonies are at present extremely feeble in manufacture, and for the most part they can supply us only with raw produce. But there is no reason why this condition of things should be eternal, and there is every reason to believe that a protective tariff against foreign manufactured goods would act as a stimulus to their infant manufactures, and thus help to prepare them for that complete interchange of trade which we desire ultimately to secure. It is evident that this is not a process to be completed in a day, but it is one of the results which may be legitimately looked for if any system of preferential tariffs is adopted. On the principle of asking at the

moment for no more than we can get—and, be it said, can get easily, with little cost of opposition and with little danger of dislocation to any conditions now favourable to ourselves—it will be well to begin at this end. There is no doubt as to what the verdict of the constituencies would be if the question of Protection were stripped for the time being of all considerations of the supply of food and raw material.

Our working men and our manufacturers are acutely conscious of the inroads which are being made upon their earnings by the foreign competitor, who, bolstered as he is by bounties, syndicates, and trusts, can afford to undersell British labour on its own ground. There was recently published a picture of an English merchant's office, in which every article of furniture and use was shown to have a foreign origin—the roller-topped desk, the revolving chair, the typewriter, the duplicating machine, the fountain pen, and even the hard-wood floor, coming from America; the blotting-pad from Germany, the thermometer from France, the inkpot from Belgium, the pencils from Bavaria, the electric fan from Holland, the telephone from Stockholm, and so on and so forth. “I descended,” says the writer of the article which accompanies this object-lesson of a picture, “by the American-made lift. As I passed down the dark shaft I could hear all round me the tapping of American typewriters, the tinkling of Swedish telephones and Belgian electric bells. John Bull was doing his business.” This is mordant enough, but everybody knows that it expresses but a fraction of the truth, and the English manufacturer who daily sees himself undersold and the artisan who is walking about with his hands in his pockets know it rather better than anybody else. If it were decided to fight this one question

first, and to take it simply on its merits without tangling it up with considerations of food supply or the taxation of raw material there would be no doubt about the verdict at the polls. The vote and interest of the mass would be at our service, and we could go to the country on an issue singularly free of complexity as compared with that we shall be called upon to face if we attempt to attack the question as a whole, and at one swoop.

It can none the less be clearly understood that this is but a part of the campaign. Having once secured a fair field for the English manufacturer and the English artisan, we can turn our attention to the other matters. The initial step will have done but little for the Colonies in their present condition of development, but as Mr. Chamberlain himself said in his address to the students of the new University of Birmingham, "we are building for the future," and if we can offer a home market for the manufactures of our Colonies we shall in degree be stimulating their energies in that direction. In the course of a generation or two they will have decided on those forms of manufacture in which they can most profitably engage, and if they can undersell us in the conditions of Free Trade in certain manufactured commodities they will be the more easily persuaded to break down the barriers which are now intended to prevent us from underselling them in certain others; and thus we shall feel our way to that entire freedom of trade within the limits of our Empire which is desired as keenly by the proposer of a preferential tariff as it is by the champion of Free Trade at large. It is not to be supposed that the foreign manufacturer will wholly cease to find a trade in our markets if we protect ourselves against an invasion which is not conducted at

present on the fairest business lines. But if he continues to trade with us it will only be on the condition that he pays his footing, and every penny of the tax he pays can be legitimately employed in the relief of those heavy burdens which press upon the English taxpayer, for it is clear that if he continues to reach our markets with goods which we can produce quite as well as he, he can only do so by practically paying the tax himself unless he does it by the production of so superior an article that the British purchaser will be willing to pay an extra price for it. We provide ourselves, therefore, with a new source of revenue which can be applied to the reduction of our own burdens, we bring down the number of the unemployed—thus bringing down taxation again—and we at least *initiate* a system of all-round Free Trade with the Colonies.

Having done all this by the submission to the electorate of an issue of perfect simplicity, we may proceed (but not without pausing to take breath and to survey the result of our own act) to consider the next portion of the problem. Here, again, we shall have to consider what the guardians of the ballot-box will grant us. We are told that we shall be encountered by the reprisals of foreign nations, and if we act with caution in this matter we shall wait to see what form these reprisals will take, and what effect they will have upon our trade. Foreign nations may enter upon a tariff war, and the fact that they cannot, with any pretence to good conscience and good grace, pretend to regard our adoption of their own methods as a provocation will not necessarily hold them back. But a tariff war, like other wars, is apt to cost even the winner something, and so long as our own demands are strictly governed by the necessity for our own

protection it is not probable that they will try to manufacture a *casus belli* out of them. America could stand the strain of such a war, but neither Germany nor Belgium nor Holland would be equal to it, and it is worthy of note that the tone of the foreign Press in general is very far from being bellicose. It has not been England's way to shrink from conflict where justice to her own people is concerned, and even if the United States were to attempt to dictate to us the terms on which we shall control our commerce whilst retaining entire liberty to do as she likes with her own—a curiously improbable contingency, by the way—she would probably find us tough in chewing and difficult of digestion.

But we are waiting for the next step. Who will measure it? Who will decide how far it is to take us? The answer is unmistakable and immediate. It is the man whose income forces him to think in terms of shillings and pence. It is the wage-earner, who has at the polls a preponderance so enormous that in sight of it the formation of a Free Food League looks almost comically superfluous. He will give us, and will give us joyfully, the liberty to readjust the incidence of taxation. If out of a tax on foreign corn and other food stuffs you will give him back its precise equivalent (or more) on beer, tea, sugar, and tobacco, you will have him with you, and on these grounds he will submit to a preferential tariff in favour of the Colonies. It is not because he is a Little Englander—for he is emphatically nothing of the sort—or because he regards our Colonial possessions and dependencies with an unfriendly or indifferent eye, that he will so strictly measure the next step in the movement towards Imperial union. It is simply because he is compelled to think in terms of pence and shillings that he

must decline to give into Mr. Chamberlain's one hand more than he receives in return from the other. The Colonial Secretary is sanguine in the belief that he can offer the wage-earner a *quid pro quo*. The wage-earner will insist upon it. He is not in a position to do otherwise.

Into the question of the taxation of raw material I am not prepared to enter. It is one the consideration of which is beset with many thorns, and it deserves, as the others do, a separate discussion and a separate vote. So far as it is possible to read the signs of the times it seems probable that a demand for a reasonable protection of the interests of the British manufacturer and the British artisan against foreign manufactured goods would sweep the country. It appears probable, further, that a moderate separate proposal for such a readjustment of the incidence of taxation as would give a preference to our Colonies whilst leaving the resources of the worker untouched would meet with little opposition. It appears probable that any prohibition of the unrestricted import of raw material for manufacture will, whether it be finally accepted or no, raise a tremendous storm in the course of its agitation. The presentation of the three together will be a mistake in tactics, for the issues they raise are far from being identical, and it is certain that their simultaneous presentment will delay the more urgent.

#### THE OLD SOCIALISM AND THE NEW.

A brave, strong man passed from us in the person of George Jacob Holyoake, who recently died within less than three months' distance from his eighty-ninth

birthday. It was by no means necessary to identify oneself with his opinions in order to admire his character. He was as little to be frightened as a mastiff, and he was as gentle as he was undaunted. A truth-seeking, large-hearted, and fearless man was Holyoake, though at one time he drew upon himself the pitiless hatred of nearly all religious England. He lived that down for the most part, and some of his ideas—regarded at the time of their inception as innovations of the most daring sort—became old-fashioned. He originated the co-operative movement in this country, and he lived to be hissed by some of his disciples because he was not advanced enough to please their fancy. It is curious and interesting to find in the issue of the *Daily Mail* which recorded his death a pronouncement from a modern man, representing the policy of the trade unions and the Independent Labour Party. We may say that with the death of George Jacob Holyoake “the old order changeth, yielding place to new” in the persons of those whose opinions and desires are expressed by Mr. Philip Snowden, who is introduced to us as “one of the most remarkable personalities among the Labour members of Parliament who were victorious at the polls.”

Before entering upon an examination of the programme this writer has to offer, we may do wisely to guard ourselves by recalling the fact that the social leader who has just passed from us, and who was looked upon sixty years ago as a dangerous, incendiary, revolutionary sort of fellow, lived long enough to see the greater number of his hopes accomplished, and eventually found himself looked on as something of a laggard in the march of progress. Even his religious opinions—and he was prosecuted and imprisoned for blasphemy—might at this time of day be promul-

gated from the pulpit without exciting any very wild commotion. He was an Agnostic, but his mind was naturally devout and reverential. John Bright spoke a part of the truth of him when he said : " Holyoake is really a very good Christian, but he doesn't know it." I am old enough to remember when Holyoake's little " freethinking " brochure, " The Logic of Death ; or, Why Should the Atheist Fear to Die ? " was regarded as a voice from the very inwards of the Pit. His argument was simply that a real Deity would not irretrievably damn anybody for being intellectually honest. As a matter of fact, it amounted to little more than a re-assertion of the old Catholic doctrine of " Invincible Ignorance," and nobody whose beliefs are worth consideration is disposed to-day to vituperate the holder of such a doctrine. And, in like manner, Holyoake's open defiance of the taxes on knowledge, his advocacy of co-operation against Capital, and of all the points of the Charter, have ceased to look reprehensible. On the whole, we cannot say of him that his programme has proved mischievous in action. But he was as much dreaded in his day by the more timid and conservative as if he had been " a madman slinging flame."

With an object-lesson like this freshly before us, it behoves us to look at the purposes of the new representatives of Labour with something of a judicial and philosophic eye. So many doctrines which once were regarded as so many menaces to the stability of the whole social fabric have been accepted and harmlessly incorporated in the common stock of thought that when we see a new and apparently dangerous idea approaching we can afford to examine it dispassionately. Perhaps it may not turn out to be quite as wicked as it looks. The object of the " workers' party " is

thus authoritatively laid down : It is first of all its duty to put the wealth-producers in possession of the wealth created by their labour, and to throw off from the backs of the workers a rich and idle class. All its activities will be directed towards the attempt to supersede the private ownership and management of industry by public ownership and control. It proposes that the municipalities shall take under immediate control such public services as fire insurance, the coal supply, the milk supply, the bread supply. It proposes to apply a similar policy to national efforts. It would nationalise the land and the railways, coal mines and canals. In this way Mr. Snowden estimates that the country would find at its disposal for purposes of social reform a sum of probably not less than £450,000,000 per annum. It proposes to offer an adequate compensation. A further means by which Labour counts on coming to its own is by its use of the powers of taxation. " Such reforms as better education, the feeding of children, the reclamation of the submerged class, the capitalisation of unemployed schemes, and old age pensions will have to be financed, not by adding to the taxation of the workers, but entirely by the taxation of the incomes and fortunes of the very rich."

It is not our practical business to ejaculate against this programme. Let us analyse it with a view to finding how far it is practicable and consistent with itself. Allow me to take the points *seriatim*. The first is that the workers shall be put in the possession of the wealth they have created. Thus set forth, this has a look of elementary justice and simplicity. But a moment's consideration shows it to be a very difficult and complex matter. Who is to decide the amount which Labour has contributed to any fortune

which has accrued to the director of any great industrial pursuit? If ever a man deserved to be called sinfully rich that man is Mr. Rockefeller, and his colossal wealth is mainly due to the invention of conduits in which to convey his oil direct from the source of production to the locomotive receptacles by means of which it is distributed to the consumers. There are workers engaged, of course, but they created neither the source of supply nor the method of distribution which has proved so hugely profitable. Are ideas to be paid for at all, and, if so, in what proportion? Will inventors or discoverers be paid a percentage on the actual money value of their discoveries? If so, we are endowing a new tribe of the idle rich. If not, we have taken away the one great stimulus to discovery and invention.

We are to supersede private ownership and management in favour of State and municipal control, but the experiments on which we have already ventured in that direction have not been so uniformly and triumphantly successful as to tempt those who have to find the money to extend them into all departments of enterprise. In many instances public control has resulted in extravagant expenditure and distinctly unfortunate service. The taxpayer will rather look with hope to a diminution of the practice than to an increase of it. But Labour, it is to be observed, is not to be taxed to pay for its own extravagances, and it is a very cheap and easy game to give yourself everything and send the bill to other people. The people who describe themselves as "the workers," and who arrogate the title exclusively to themselves, expend a great deal less of energy, in very many cases, and lay down their daily task with less fatigue than thousands of the rest of us who labour at the

arts, or who spend their lives in the pursuit of law, medicine, commerce, journalism. There is no proposal to make us immune from our burdens.

And let it be noted further that, although the programme professes to make an assault upon the bloated capitalist alone, we are offered the suggestion that the bloated capitalist is to be abolished. Capital, deprived of increment, cannot long continue to endure the drain made upon it; and when all the costly schemes for better education for the workers, free food for the children of the workers, the State salvation of the submerged among the workers, the provision of State employment for the workers and of old-age pensions to the workers—when all these schemes are set afloat, and Capital is sucked dry, who is there left outside the professional and business classes to pay the piper? It is further to be remarked that an adequate compensation for those who are to surrender their private property to the State is estimated to make that State richer by £450,000,000 per annum. To speak of an adequate compensation which results in so prodigious a profit is to use a flat contradiction in terms. The owners of property are to be bought out. Where is the money to come from? It is to be got by the taxation of the owners of property, who are first to pay for the purchase of that which at present belongs to themselves, and are then to be adequately compensated, still out of their own pockets, for a transaction which deprives them of £450,000,000 a year.

This is not an invention of any writer of burlesque, nor is it the narrative of a nightmare. It is the serious programme of a young Socialist member of the new Parliament, who speaks authoritatively for the Independent Labour Party. He is spoken of as a

lucid and intelligent writer and as having a rather exceptional reputation as a public speaker. "I am not concerned now," he writes, "to justify the policy and the object of the Labour Representation movement. We are satisfied of the wisdom of the policy, the justice of the object. I want now only to explain the policy and the object for the information of those who do not understand either." That is how he does it, and he instructs his readers that they may now banish their fears or strengthen their defences, just as their wisdom or self-interest dictates. There can be no mistake about the fact that the challenge to property is offered in earnest, and there can be no mistake either as to the fact that the forces which are summoned to battle are terribly disproportioned as to numbers in a conflict in which the final appeal is to numbers and to numbers only. If the workers so choose, they have the power to enforce upon us every item in the Socialist programme. They are making great strides even now, and unless we can find some counteracting force, we bid fair to be driven along a road which, to the apprehension of most thinking men, is the way of madness. To discount the danger is to make a mockery of a real and serious thing. The probabilities are, of course, that as a result of the latest movement of the Democracy there will ensue a new fusion of parties and that many even amongst the most advanced Radicals will unite with those with whose political views they are in general dispute to present a firm front to this new movement. But, however gallantly they may fight, Labour holds the winning card. The ace of trumps is in their hands and they can use it when they please.

In this position there is nothing for it but to be unremitting in our efforts to educate the electorate.

How very difficult a task that will prove to be is abundantly established by the correspondence which reaches me from week to week. I have lately ventured to suggest that the idea of property in land had its beginning amongst those primeval men who had found a profitable use for it. Quite a little handful of people write to me citing my last week's quotation of Pope's famous quatrain against myself. "A little learning is indeed a dangerous thing," writes one, "and you yourself afford a splendid proof. Was not the land of England partitioned amongst his hordes by the Bastard of Normandy?" And I am treated to a little sermon on my obvious ignorance of a thing known to every child at a Board school. But, as it happens, I was writing of a principle which had been established in the minds of men—demonstrably established—many thousands of years before the Norman Conquest. There is no authentic history of a time when man—corporate or individual, or both and either—did not assert an ownership in the soil, and was not willing to fight and die in the defence of what he conceived to be his right. What is the good of appealing to the Norman Conquest when we are discussing the origin of an instinctive principle which came into play many thousands of years before it? If we are to accept the conclusions of those who have investigated the caves in the Valley of the Dordogne, or those of Kent or America, man has lived on this earth many, many thousands of years. The Cave Man had his own cave, and beyond a doubt he resented its usurpation by another. I suggest the most probable idea of the beginning of a human instinct some conceivable millions of years ago, and I am told that I have consulted my own worthless brains whilst the history of William the Bastard is available

in any free library. What *are* you to do with such people? Is it of any use at all to spend fact and logic on them? I suppose the only thing to do is to go on trying, in spite of much constant heaviness of heart and an occasional flash of impatience.

### WHY SOCIALISM MUST FAIL.

EVEN in the days when it was printed and published in the provinces, the *Clarion* was a power amongst the more thoughtful men of the working-class, and the opinion of "Nunquam"—its weightiest and most popular contributor—on the hopes, aims, and duties of Labour had probably more influence than that of any other English journalist over the limited constituency he then addressed. Since the paper migrated to Fleet Street it has entered on a much wider sphere. Those writers for the Press who make it their business to look at the social problems of their time all round have been familiar with its truculently outspoken pages, and have been more or less prepared for that sudden-seeming awaking of the Labour Party which has taken the rest of the world by surprise. Even the *Times* has at last become aware of the existence of the *Clarion*, has deigned to a momentary skirmish with Mr. Robert Blatchford, and has allowed that the fighting journal and its inspiring spirit are among the modern forces in politics which have to be reckoned with. Mr. Blatchford is one of those men who unfailingly compel the esteem and liking of those who are admitted to a real knowledge of them. He is scrupulously honest in opinion, he does not know how to be afraid, he does know how to be courteous and incisive at the same time, and there are few

men now writing who are as happy as he is in respect to the great gift of style. He writes the most lucid, simple, and delightful English, and he can be more just to the thought of an adversary than one man in a hundred.

I have said before this that nobody cares which way a pop-gun points, but it is a matter of real import to make sure whether a man of this species is on the right side or the wrong—whether he has planted his artillery on or against the Devil's earthworks. I don't think Mr. Blatchford believes in the Devil, but the phrase may pass as a convenient *façon de parler*. There are many respects in which it seems to me impossible for any man who is possessed of heart and brain not to be in sympathy with Mr. Blatchford. Born to the hard heritage of labour, and knowing out of his own early needs how labour is exploited, crushed, and harried by the combined forces of rapacity and indifference, he has flung himself into the social fight on the side of the proletariat. He wants to lift the worker to a higher level. He wants to have him better taught, better mannered, better fed, better clothed, better paid, better housed. He wants to raise him from the condition of a labouring machine, somewhat inefficiently stoked, to that of a right-thinking, right-acting freeman. The aim, beyond question, is noble. In itself it commands everybody's admiration and assent. But when we come to look at the means by which Mr. Blatchford proposes to accomplish it there are some of us—and, until now, we count the majority on our side—who cannot help thinking that he works in the wrong direction, and that his teaching is distinctly mischievous to those to whom he so ardently desires to be of service.

If I come into personal collision with Mr. Blatchford himself I am assured beforehand that he will not take refuge in any abuse of my ignorance of his own plainly-stated position. One of his lieutenants in the *Clarion* tells me that there are thousands of young recruits to Socialism who "could pulverise without any effort the awful wibble-waffle" provided by me to educate the electorate against the schemes of the Socialists. I presume "wibble-waffle" to be a fair synonym for "flapdoodle," which Captain Marryat defines as the stuff they feed fools on. I will take it as signifying not merely nonsense, but nonsense of the immediately recognisable and pulverisable sort. Now, I take this statement about the awful wibble-waffle in combination with another statement that, "like Mr. Chamberlain," I display an ignorance of the aims of Socialism which "only excites pity." Now, I make my appeal from the lieutenant to the captain. In the only article of mine which could possibly have been before the writer at the time at which he delivered his assault I quoted with entire precision the aspirations set forward by Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P. I find these aspirations expressed by Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Blatchford. They embrace the nationalisation of the land, of mines, railways, and canals. They embrace the substitution of State control for private control in all affairs of banking, commerce, and exchange. The State is to be the universal controller, owner, and employer. Well, there is the objective to which the Socialists move. Where is the ignorance which excites pity displayed in my statement of it?

My reasons for believing this scheme to be impracticable (if once the electorate is made to understand it) are not to be pulverised by any one of

Mr. Suthers's thousand young Socialists who is not prepared first of all to pulverise two of the strongest instincts in human nature. The first of these is the desire for ownership, backed by the immemorial belief in its justice where property has been acquired by the expenditure of honest effort, or has been inherited from one who has so acquired it. The second of them is the general assent—also immemorial—which is accorded to this principle by those who do not themselves hold or own any of those properties at the expropriation of which the Socialists aim. There is a general feeling—whether mistaken or not it is no business of mine to decide just at this moment—that there is a limit to the rights of majorities, and that the State has no right to deprive a citizen of more than a necessary portion of that which he has legally acquired under its sanction. Now, these beliefs may be the most “awful wibble-waffle” in the world, but the Socialists will find that they have to be reckoned with, and that they are hard to kill. The contention is, of course, that a great deal of the property the rights of which I defend has not been acquired by honest effort. The gentleman who desires me to look for the origin of the idea of property in land to the partition of the fat acres of England invites me to the contemplation of the fact that many families were ennobled by the Conqueror, and were enriched by the unlawful confiscation of lands originally owned by people who had imbibed their sense of ownership aforetime. And is there anywhere one acre of English ground which has not since that time changed ownership by sale and purchase? I ask for information, like Miss Dartle. Is there one direct descendant from anyone of the Norman's hordes who owns a square yard of earth

which was riven from the Saxon? There may be. I don't know. But I do know that it has become impossible to identify a class of landowners which owes its existence to the Conquest.

There has been much spoliation since the Saxon was despoiled, and the profitable result of it has passed from hand to hand in the way of legalised exchange so often that from a practical point of view it is quite futile to take that side of the case into consideration. I have myself in my own day seen some encroachments on common rights—and I may be allowed to say in passing that, wherever the chance has been afforded me, I have fought against them—but even these it will be found hard to rectify, and long before the machinery the Socialists desire to use can be got into action, they also will have arrived at such sanction as can be afforded by use and wont. My wibble-waffle is based upon two facts. In the earliest times of which we have record the idea of property was explicitly asserted and as explicitly accepted. The belief in the sanctity of private ownership is very deeply rooted in the popular mind, and it will not be easy to disturb it.

I am asked by my critic if I hope to convince the people that slums are good for health. I do not know my opponent's record, but I began to study and to write about the housing of the poor in 1871. Since then I have fought against the greed of landlordism and the sloth of municipalities tooth and nail. Eight-and-twenty years ago I called the attention of the British public to "The True Eastern Question," and showed that we had to study it in London. I am the man who for seven weeks tramped mid-England through, living in common lodging-houses and workhouses, and breaking stones and picking

oakum, and drinking bacon broth and union skilly by the way, to demonstrate the fact that under British law it was, in the year 1879, impossible—as it is still impossible—for an honest workman to emerge alive from an unsuccessful search for work, without some infraction of the legal chain which seems as if it were constructed for no other purpose than to strangle him. I have learned the slums of half the world, from Edinburgh to Naples, from Melbourne to New York, and I have recorded my experiences in a round thousand columns of printed type, and I live to be asked if I propose to convince the people that they are good places to live in. It is more than a trifle odd to a contributor to the *Referee* of some years' standing to be asked if he hopes to convince the people that hungry children should go unfed. There is not one contributor to this journal who is not proud of the fact that the *Referee* Children's Dinner Fund, long since founded in this office, has fed between five and six million hungry little stomachs, thanks—and heartfelt thanks—to the generous souls who so magnificently support us.

As I have said already, there is no mistaking Mr. Blatchford. In that number of the *Clarion* in which his lieutenant subjects me to the absurd catechism I have just dealt with he once more sets out his views. It is hardly possible to compress Mr. Blatchford, for he uses a fine economy in words, but I will attempt the task, following his own language loyally. Socialists, he tells us, cannot be bribed or conciliated. No compromise is possible. They must have all. The fight must be to a finish. The Socialist movement is the beginning of a world-wide revolution. Until the earth belongs to all men, and masters and servants are no more, the Socialists will relentlessly

attack and ruthlessly smash any and every party that opposes the emancipation of the race. "Is that plain?" asks Mr. Blatchford. Yes. It is quite plain. And it is absolutely in accord with that description of the aims of Socialism which was given by me a fortnight back, and is held up to scorn by Mr. Blatchford's lieutenant as displaying an ignorance which can only excite pity. I do not expect that kind of arrogant rubbish from the most brilliant and the fairest of all the disputants on his side, and I shall not get it. But I propose to offer for his consideration some reasons which appear to me to make the ultimate triumph of his ideal improbable, to say the least. With two of these I have dealt already. I can look on the discussion with a certain detachment, for, in the sense in which Mr. Blatchford uses the words, I am neither a master nor a servant. I own no land or houses or money in the funds, and I do not expect to own any. But the instinctive desire to hold is very strong, and the instinctive desire to take away is regarded by the great majority of civilised men as being dishonest.

Well, Mr. Blatchford acknowledges of his own free will that he has a stiff battle before him in dealing with these two instincts; but he reckons that he has behind him such a mass of wrong and suffering, and such a force of gathering indignation and resolve, that he can sweep them away in the end. The future is full of work, he tells us, and full of enemies. We must grant the wrong and the suffering. We have no option. They are too evident and too real for dispute. We must admit the indignation and resolve. They are forces which all wise men will strive to utilise. But the Socialists will proceed from stage to stage, and with every success they achieve the

grievances will grow less pressing, and the indignation and resolve will have less justification for their own existence. The Socialistic movement will probably do much. It will impound for the service of the State a large proportion of all forms of unearned increment. It will make an end of the crueler forms of exaction on the part of landlordism, especially in the regions inhabited by the ill-paid and half-skilled worker. It will force the wholly reluctant Tory and the half-reluctant well-to-do Radical towards a graduated income-tax. It will find the motive force which will move the inert mass of mankind in many ways. But in precise proportion with its success its fires will burn less fiercely, and the necessity laid upon it for action will grow less urgent. Mr. Blatchford proudly proclaims it the beginning of a world-wide revolution. It is neither the beginning nor the end. It is a symptom of a revolution which has been in progress for centuries. It will do its appointed work and it will die. When Tennyson wrote of the broad-brimmed hawker of holy things whose desire it was to put down war, he asked, very pertinently, if war be a cause or a consequence. The tragic hero of "Maud" cries out :

Put down the passions that make earth hell !  
Down with ambition, avarice, pride !

But Mr. Blatchford has not only to encounter and to vanquish these eternal enemies to the welfare of mankind. He has also to vanquish some of the human virtues. He has to vanquish that stubborn sense of equity which refuses equality to those who have surrendered themselves to sloth, and drink, and filth, and pauperism. For his crusade against the wealthy drone he shall have my best wishes and such help as I can render him.

## OUR POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION.

MR. PANKS, evolving grammatical exercises from the grinding tyrannies of Mr. Cadby, brought forth the formula of keeping always at it. Keep him always at it. Keep her always at it. Keep them always at it. Keep thou always at it. In the matter of exacting small dues of rent from the very poor it is easy to carry the process into the region of the disagreeable, and so Mr. Panks keenly felt it. But perhaps the public instructor who is in genuine earnest, and is at war with the multitudinous dragons of our social life, has almost as unpleasant a time of it as the sensitive Panks himself. For one thing he runs the risk of being mistaken for a bore. If he fight too long or too often with any one particular dragon, the people who have been looking on at the combat arise and disperse and say, "How very monotonous!" For it happens, by the dispensation of Providence, that the poor publicist, whether he be journalist, or pulpитеr, or Parliamentarian, or writer of books with a purpose, is obliged either to make his dragon-fights varied and amusing, or to conduct them in a *solitude à deux*. People don't care greatly for the social reformer—quâ social reformer. If, in his tiltings, he can exhibit the graces of the *haute école*, or can do funny things with his hobby-horse, he will get lookers-on in plenty—for the sake of the horsemanship or the drollery—but woe betide him if he can show no more than the most malevolent of dragons and the best will in the world to exterminate it. The world will tolerate his battle

with the beast if he carries it through in an amusing manner, but not otherwise. Yet a harder necessity than that of Panks is laid upon him, and he must keep always at it.

The callous indifference to the sufferings of the poor which brought parochial officialdom under the lash in "Oliver Twist," and prompted its author to the portraiture of Alderman Cate and Mr. Gradgrind, and a hundred other representatives of their class, has given way to a false benevolence which is not less revolting to the heart and mind of any man who keeps his heart and brain in balance. It is not so long ago but that I myself can well remember when it was the avowed official aim of the governing classes to make poverty uncomfortable, in the belief that the more those who had fallen into it were made to feel its miseries, the less likely they would be to acknowledge them and to appeal for an assistance which was never rendered except under conditions of extremest humiliation, and on the acceptance of many artificial disabilities. This spirit has very largely passed out of the mind of those who have control in these affairs, though here and there the most casual reader of the provincial newspapers may find it flourishing in all its old luxuriance. Most men welcomed its disappearance, and were glad to find that the publicly-elected Guardians of the Poor were, as a body, beginning to realise something of the meaning of their name. But we find that the pendulum has taken a sudden and a violent swing, and that Boards of Guardians are now vying with each other as to who shall most richly endow a great body of the undeserving.

There is a vast amount of unrelieved poverty in our midst, much of it, from the character of those who suffer it, deserving of such aid as society can afford

—much of it utterly undeserving, and self-sought, whether by idleness, intemperance, general shiftlessness, or actual crime. We have here in London alone a standing army of little less than 150,000 in numbers which is supported under conditions of pauperdom by the rates. If there were any very marked contrast in the characters and careers of those who are wholly neglected or given over to the mercies of unorganised or unofficial charity, and the characters and careers of those who are habitually dependent upon the rates, there would be some reason for the great difference which exists in the lot of those who have forced themselves upon the rates and those who have not. But it is not because of any intelligible claim or of any intelligible want of it that one division of poverty's army is housed in homes like palaces and fed on the fat of the land, whilst the units of another division find their sole nightly coverlid the skies, and their sole place of rest a doorstep. There are hundreds in our work-houses whose moral right to their shelter is not one atom greater than is that of those who prowl roofless about our streets.

There can never be any reform in our poor law administration until some discrimination is exerted in regard to this one matter. It is at present a fact, which nobody thinks it worth while to dispute, that many of our paupers who enjoy a complete immunity from labour and the responsibilities of life are entirely undeserving of their privileges. Nobody thinks it worth while, either, to deny that many who do not receive relief are in poverty quite as deep as those to whom it has been given, in spite of a loyal and life-long effort to do well. A system which is answerable for that contrast alone would have to be confessed an

administrative failure anywhere. But if we come to a real indictment of the laws which govern the relief of the poor, we shall not readily have done with a mere recapitulation of the main counts of it. In the first place, we have seen that where it relieves it does so without discrimination. Then we find it with a code so loose that it can be manipulated in any fashion which suits the whim of any individual Board. In St. George's-in-the-East, for example, outdoor relief has been practically abolished. In Poplar it is lavishly distributed, though there is no more real sign of urgent poverty in the one parish than in the other. At St. Olave's there was at one time a trouble-saving practice of issuing relief tickets to the more troublesome applicants, and these became an article of barter, and in some cases were traded off for such luxuries as potted lobster. Under these conditions both outdoor and indoor relief increased, as Jack Tar says, "at the rate of knots." Later, a few extra officials were appointed to inquire into the needs and antecedents of applicants for relief, and the siege of St. Olave's melted away.

The great indictment against the Guardians is not that they are mainly composed of faddists and ignorant amateurs and persons who have their own interests to serve—though this charge is absolutely true, and no man will concern himself to deny it—nor that they have failed to devise means to check the greed and rapacity of one class or to assist the meritorious need of another. It is that they have wantonly laid a heavy and unnecessary load upon the shoulders of honest effort. In each of a hundred thousand unpretentious homes in London there may be found a man whose life is made up of a hard six days' grind per week, and a woman consumed with little household

worries born of the hourly need to stretch a shilling into thirteen pence. They pinch, they save, they strive ; and their one dread is the rate-collector, who comes at his appointed time inexorable as fate. Nobody proposes to adopt the philosophy of the new style Northern Farmer, with his " Täak my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad." There are people who merit all the help we can give them, and who are yet reduced to live upon the rates. But there is a very considerable proportion who have not one spark of independence in their nature, and who eat the bread of idleness from choice. And striving, honourable, needy industry is taxed to build for these worthless wretches palaces to live in—one London workhouse has cost very nearly three hundred pounds in building for every pauper it can accommodate—and to provide for them a table of such monstrous waste that they have been known to choke the sewers with the surplus of their satiety. The small ratepayer cannot live in such luxury, work as hard as he may, as the wilfully idle enjoy every day of their lives at his expense. To read the plain fact about the model modern workhouses of London is to find oneself presented with an almost incredible picture. Dining-rooms with parquetted floors ; heating apparatus silvered ; baths of porcelain ; kitchens which, on the word of one travelled visitor, are the finest he has ever seen, " rivalling those of the ' Waldorf-Astoria Hotel ' in New York."

These things, with the sumptuous installation of electric light, the lawns, the carriage drives, the shrubberies, are in the main made over to the out-of-work unskilled labourer. If he be honestly willing to work and out of employment by misfortune, no man will grudge him such food and shelter as he needs. But

he does not need these costly trappings, and he has no right to them at the cost of those whose keenest industry and most griping economy leave them open to the clutch of poverty at any hour of sickness or disablement. One worthy gentleman, defending the egregious existing system, satisfies himself with the declaration that "all buildings belonging to the people should be palatial." That is a good round mouthful of windy nonsense. It is barely likely to satisfy those who pay the piper. We are putting a premium on idleness. The unskilled labourer who crowds our "Homes of Rest"—we are no longer to offend our paupers by speaking of their places of residence as Workhouses—finds that he is miles better off when out of work than he ever was when in it, or is ever likely to be. What wonder if here and there the lesson is borne home to him, and that we find amongst us a growing crowd of work-shirkers?

In a recent edition of the *Daily Mail* I find Mr. Frederick Dolman defending those who are responsible for the increase of the rates, on the ground that the late Government was guilty of enlarging the responsibilities of the Local Governing bodies without enlarging their sources of revenue. That opens up another aspect of the case which has nothing to do with the point in hand. The Local Governing bodies, and they alone, must accept the responsibility for a policy the result of which, as seen already, has been to exile trade, to encourage pauperism, and to throw upon the shoulders of many of the industrious and deserving a wholly unnecessary load. There is immediate work for the New Party to do in rescuing the public from the hands of the noodles and nobodies who, by mere force of numbers, swamp the efforts of the intelligent experts who too rarely find a place

amongst them. It would appear, on the face of it, possible to effect greater economies in the housing and feeding of seven or eight hundred people *en masse* than in the sustentation of the same number when scattered in households of four or five. That this end is not attained is due partly to loose management, but chiefly to the existence of those controlling bodies which, already gifted with a dangerous irresponsibility, are clamouring for a greater freedom from departmental control.

The principle of popular representation has taken a singular hold on the imagination of men wherever it has been introduced, and there is no idea more widely spread than this : That the broader the base of the electorate the sounder the choice which will issue from its fiat. Everybody knows that this principle has nowhere resulted in a conspicuous success, and it is easy to point to many instances of ignominious failure. We are told that in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom, and there is no doubt that wisdom may be found in any multitude—in spots. We have but to look at our House of Commons, in which, at the extreme outside, there are fifty individual voices which have any potency in the counsels of the State, whilst the odd hundreds are just so many voting and chattering instruments and nothing more. In the Councils of County, City and Borough the average of intellectual force is lower, and the proportion of cry to wool is about the same. The Triton amongst the minnows of a rustic Board of Guardians would be himself a minnow amongst the Tritons of a City Council, and would perforce acknowledge the mastery of the longest-eared ass that ever brayed from Parliamentary benches. Of all popularly-elected bodies the Guardians of the Poor have most strikingly displayed the error of the method

by which they are chosen. What is wanted is first a definition of the real work of the supervisors of our indigent population, and next the choice of a sufficing number of able officials to see that the work is carried out. We have had more than enough of the ignorant amateur.



## LITERARY



## CONCERNING BOOKS.

MORE than twenty years ago Sir John Lubbock, as he then was, gave to the world a list of what was called the Best Hundred Books. The idea seemed somehow or other to tickle the public fancy, and a considerable number of people of eminence took the trouble to discuss it seriously; amongst them Gladstone, Ruskin, Blackie, Dr. Garnett, and James Russell Lowell. It was all very well to spring a *jeu d'esprit* like this upon the public just for once, and there was a certain real interest and value in the opinions of some of the best-read men of the time as to the books which out of all the huge range of the world's literatures were likely to yield most profit or pleasure to the student. But there was no purpose to be served by a repetition of the jest, and Lord Avebury does not even seem to have learned how heavily he has handicapped himself by the choice of an arbitrary number. Nor does he seem to see how he transgresses his own rule by setting down Sir Walter Scott's novels as a single book. But the broad questions which any thoughtful reader of Lord Avebury's catalogue will ask himself are simply these: On what principle has the selection been conducted? For what purposes are the books chosen the "best books"? For what kind of reader are they the "best books"? It may be admitted that the man who had thoughtfully read through Lord

Avebury's library would have the right to boast of an unusual catholicity of taste, and perhaps an unusual toughness of literary constitution. But one may ask with a more or less concealed astonishment, if there was ever yet in the history of the world a human mind so constituted that it could find the proper sort of reception for, let us say, "The Faërie Queene" of Edmund Spenser, Grote's "Greece," Carlyle's "French Revolution," and Pascal's "Pensées," and at the same time tune itself to regard the late Samuel Smiles's "Self Help" as one of the Hundred Best Books of the world. The thing is manifestly out of question. No man of literary taste will cede to Mr. Smiles the place which is here so generously assigned to him. The same reader may bathe his spirit in the splendours of Euripides and the comedy of Dickens, he may revel in the rich style of Jeremy Taylor, and in the fantasies of Heine; he may find his pleasure in Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding" and in "Gulliver's Travels," but the man who is fitted to hold anything like a real commerce with the treasures of a well-chosen library will unhesitatingly relegate Mr. Smiles to the great sphere of commonplace to which he rightfully belongs.

The colossal error which includes the apostle of the creed of Getting On amongst writers like Aristotle, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Molière, to say nothing of such mere mortals as Southey, Defoe, Goldsmith, and the natural historian of Selborne, is enough to vitiate the selector's claim to authority, whatever it may be. The most extensive and pains-taking reading, the widest range of scholarship, will not by themselves qualify a man to pronounce a literary verdict, and the student may take it for granted that no man who takes Smiles for a giant is a judge of in-

tellectual stature. But the omissions of the list are, at least, as striking as the singular choice which is here and there extended. The compiler can find no room for the greatest achievements of literary art in France. There is no Rabelais, no Balzac, no Victor Hugo. In a catalogue which includes many foreign names, and at the same time embodies those of George Eliot, Bulwer Lytton, and Charles Kingsley, this is not just. But, then, anything like justice is impossible under the rules Lord Avebury has set himself. "Tom Jones" is incomparably a greater work of fiction than "The Vicar of Wakefield," and in the Hundred Best Books the greater is omitted in favour of the smaller. Nobody wants to excise dear old Goldsmith from the list of those whose books are treasured by the lover of literature, but it is absurd to crown his good Vicar at the expense of Père Goriot and Jean Valjean. Kingsley was a fine robust writer, and "Westward Ho!" is a fine achievement; but to set him and it side by side with Shakespeare and Molière, to the exclusion of the writers cited, is to provoke derision. Gray's "Elegy" is precious, but not so precious that it has a right to elbow the whole of Keats and Shelley from the field of English letters. The task of choice is not merely difficult where any arbitrary limitation in the way of number is appointed. It is impossible—and from beginning to end invidious.

Into a question like this so large an element of personal liking and misliking must always enter as will make the individual judgment of small value. To the real reader, books, I fancy, are very like men and women. There are some to whom your heart is instantly open; there are others, who may be among the worthiest of their species, whom you will never learn to esteem at their real value. If I were at the

Confessional or in the witness-box I should have to own to many failures to enjoy books which delight my neighbours. I cannot endure Richardson, for example, and Miss Austen is a weariness to my spirit. I find so competent a critic as Mr. Frederick Greenwood hazarding the opinion that if Thackeray were still alive he would vote for the omission of his own "*Pendennis*" to make room in Lord Avebury's list for one of Jane Austen's books. Now, I would not sell Old Cos and Captain Strong, and Altamont and Warrington for a wilderness of Miss Austens. Barter Blanche Amory, and M. Mirobolant, and Morgan, and the Major for a shelf-full of volumes on the model of "*Pride and Prejudice*"? Never! But this, you see, is a matter of taste, and in matters of taste there is no disputing. When one comes to serious literature, as some people call it, it must be confessed that there is a prodigious amount of duty-reading to be done, which yields but little pleasure, though there is undoubtedly a compensation on this side. Much of the study in which I now find the sincerest consolation of my life would never have been entered upon at all except at the bidding of necessity. And out of this experience, if there were ever much use in giving wholesale advice upon a theme like this, I would counsel all young readers to do a certain quantity of reading across the grain, regularly and as a matter of custom; settling down to something really brain-breaking and uninviting, in the perfect certainty that in the end the exercise will repay them by a strengthening of the mental peptics and a growth of the mental muscle.

We return to the original questions. For whom is this list intended, and for what general or particular purpose is it supposed to contain the names of the

books best suited to the requirements of the mind ? For the student it is an obvious supererogation to have prepared it at all. He has decided upon his course of work already, and he knows on whose whetstone he can best sharpen his chisel. Is it meant for the young man whose outlook on life and its duties is as yet undefined ? Then I say without hesitation that a great many of the books he is here advised to study will lead him to a woeful waste of time, and that others will be distinctly mischievous to him. There is a kind of boy and a kind of budding woman to whom a kindly man would as soon prescribe a diet of arsenic as the reading of Thomas à Kempis. In a very modified degree the same thing is true of Keble's "Christian Year," which, in point of style, force, originality of thought, and everything that goes to the making of a great book, is very much on a level with Mr. Smiles's "Self Help." It has at least no right to a place in the Hundred Best Books or the Hundred Thousand Best Books of the world, and it will probably be as dead as a door-nail before the world has ceased to laugh over the drolleries of "Tom Sawyer," which is the work of an adult Yankee boy, written for boys the wide world over, and a monument of genius by comparison. And, keeping in mind the idea that the list as we have it before us was meant for the adolescent, one wants to know why one should waste his time on Malory, who is all fairy tale without imagination or elevation, whilst Piers Plowman, who knew and loved and understood the England of his day, stands waiting with his panorama of truth and high fancy. Or is the list intended for "the general reader" ? Then his orbit has been eccentric indeed, if it has not swung him through all the worthy part of it. He will be none the poorer

if he has missed the "Analects" of Confucius and knows his Solomon. He can let go Wake's Collection of the Apostolic Fathers with a clear conscience. Of the "Maha Bharata" and the "Rama Yana" I must perforce speak with the respect of ignorance. I know nothing of Kalidasa or of the Chinese Odes, but I am almost certain that if there were anything of the intellectually compulsory element about them I should have known them before this in the course of a life of omnivorous reading.

It is easy to see how the temptation to depend on the personal equation arises, and one knows better how strenuously it ought to be resisted than one knows how to resist it. But for all that, the final appeal is to the personal experience, and my own personal experience counsels me to this. It is a million times better not to read at all than to read *anything* whatsoever which is not vital to the understanding or the heart. It does not matter so much what you read as how you read. And yet I would not have any young fool running away from me in the idea that I deride system or the experience of the experienced. Talk on this theme is in the main doomed to be useless. If I have any eager young bookworm in my congregation, I know very well that he will be a bookworm without any interference from me; and as for him that is empty-headed, he will be empty-headed to the end of the chapter, though I spread the most appetising brain fare before him. There is this much to be said for Lord Avebury's list: it is so far right that the averagely well-read Englishman will be found already to have gravitated towards some three-fourths of it; but then it is just so far superfluous. Its main error is perhaps that it makes no use of the anthology. Surely *one* of the Best

Hundred Books in the world might have been made out of a collection of the gems of British Song ; another out of the French ; another from the German. Where these exist they give the quintessence of national thought and feeling, and no really worthy representative of this class need have been passed in favour of a writer like Hesiod, who is, and is likely to remain, absolutely caviare to the general.

A useful thing to have attempted in such a connection as this would have been to afford to the student some means of arriving at the especial characteristics of the great literary races of the world. The higher manifestations of genius must always have a certain affinity with each other. It is not merely fanciful to say that there is more than an echo of that inevitability of consequence in human affairs which it is the distinguishing characteristic of Æschylus to reveal, in the story of the murder of Montague Tigg and the tracking down of Jonas Chuzzlewit, and yet the great Greek tragedian and the great English comedian are at the opposite poles of genius. But human nature, whilst in its more striking manifestations in all countries and all ages it presents an unescapable similarity, is yet full of diversities, and each of the great literatures is so coloured and moulded by the circumstances of its time as to present an entirely individual physiognomy of its own. We trace this perhaps less in the few scores of books which deserve emphatically to be ranked amongst "the best" than in those periodical national outbreaks of literary tendency which we instinctively recognise as expressing the real genius and temper of a people. We find such a movement evidenced in the poems of the German *Minnesänger*, in the *chansons des gestes* of France, in the ballad poetry of England, in the spontaneous

development of the Tuscan school in Italy at the end of the thirteenth century, in the Picaresque novels of Spain nearly three hundred years later ; no less than in the more splendid and important displays of genius which have marked the varying nations at different epochs of their career, which have given to Germany its supremacy in philosophy and criticism, to France its classic drama, its drama of manners, and the polished and incisive logic of its thinkers, to England the astonishing riches of no fewer than three separate eras—the Elizabethan, the Augustan, and the Victorian—to Italy the immortal crown of the Divine Comedy, and to Spain Cervantes, Calderon, and Lope de Vega.

There is a why and a wherefore for the existence of every one of these, and it is of the acutest interest to know what peculiarities of national circumstance and environment assisted in their production. No man can read the literature of any nation at any of its periods to full advantage without having at least a general knowledge of the social conditions under which it was produced, and so it comes about that you want four or five sets of the Best Hundred Books if you are to acquire anything but a surface knowledge of that tremendous field to which Lord Avebury invites you. His lordship, by the way, has expressed a naïve astonishment at the verdict of Mr. James Payn, who thought that a study of his list was likely to contribute to the making of a very satisfactory prig. He asks what man is likely to be led in that direction by the reading of any one book in his catalogue. But Lord Avebury mistakes Mr. Payn's point altogether. No book in his list will have any effect of that sort *per se*. But the publication of such a list as this does undoubtedly give a certain section of mankind an

opportunity for going vapouring about with a set of imposing titles and names, and this is a temptation which the prig cannot resist. It is not necessary for everybody to be an omnivorous reader. But if you do really aim at a fair general knowledge of the mental treasures of this earth nobody can withhold them from you in these days of free libraries, and it will take more than a hundred books to satisfy your cravings, though the chances are that in the long run you will settle down on a gross or two of old favourites, and will find that you have but a casual hour now and then to bestow on much that is excellent and even great.

## THE SUFFERINGS OF MEN OF GENIUS.

A volume entitled "Biographic Clinics" has been sent to me with a suggestion to the effect that it might afford material for a useful and interesting article. It was the work of George M. Gould, M.D., the Editor of "American Medicine," and author of one or two well-known books, with one of which only, "The Meaning and Method of Life," I can claim any personal acquaintance. The principal contention of "Biographic Clinics" is that the sufferings with which many of our greatest writers and thinkers have been notoriously afflicted were due to eye-strain, and that a proper adjustment of the eyes to the functions they are called upon to perform would have removed the dyspepsia, the insomnia, the sick headaches, and the nervous irritability which wrung from writers and students like Huxley, De Quincey, Darwin, George Eliot, Wagner, Nietzsche, Browning, and some half a dozen others the heart-rending com-

plaints with which readers of their biographies and letters are so mournfully familiar. Dr. Gould, in offering to the world an extended edition of his book under the old title, laments that the reception of his earlier volume was "not flattering or encouraging." The official spokesmen of the profession, so he writes, "either kept silent, gave a perfunctory notice of the book for the sake of duty or courtesy, hinted dissent, were as cynical as their doubts or kindness would permit, or were downright contemptuous." Nothing dismayed, he returns to the charge, as emphatic and as confident of his cause as ever.

As to the reality of the symptoms there can, of course, be no doubt whatever. Carlyle's is the case best known, partly because of that commanding personality which made everything pertaining to him of interest to the world of readers, and partly because of the extraordinary picturesqueness with which his complaints were expressed. The specific diagnosis of his case, however, is omitted from this volume. It is not easy to see why it should be so, since it affords at least as strong a proof as any of the author's contentions. The volume is an extremely painful one to read, consisting as it does mainly of the record of the miseries endured by men and women of genius who have in one way or another endeared themselves to all of us. George Eliot writes of herself as a prisoner in the Castle of Giant Despair. She tells her correspondent that an utter dismay of ever being equal to the demands of life possesses her. "I think of death as a fast-approaching end of a journey." "Utterly despondent about my book." "Much afflicted with hopelessness and melancholy just now." Mr. Gould gives us many pages of this mournful matter from the pen of a writer who at the very time

at which she was thus suffering was delighting all of us. "Extreme languor and unbroken fatigue from morning till night." "I see, on looking back this morning—Christmas Day—" (this was the time at which she was engaged upon "*Deronda*") "that I was really in worse health and suffered equal depression about '*Romola*,' and, so far as I have recorded, the same thing seems to be true of '*Middle-march*.'" Now, the point made by the author of "*Biographic Clinics*" is that there is never at any time any observable cessation or diminution of these distressing symptoms so long as the strain of reading and writing rests upon the eye, but that whenever the eye-strain at short range is relieved there is an immediate comparative return to health.

We are told, for example, of a Continental holiday in the course of which George Eliot enjoyed an entire surcease from pain. From the day she set her foot on Continental soil until she returned to Witley she was never ill—never even ailing. Mornings were spent at the Louvre, afternoons in long walks in the Bois, evenings at the theatre. Reading and writing filled in the interstices of time, but there was no malaise, no consciousness of fatigue. The same happy condition of things accompanied her in Italy and throughout her tour. The return to labour—and in Mr. Gould's sense labour is synonymous with eye-strain—is instantly followed by a renewal of all the old troubles. The suggestion is that the case is one for the oculist rather than for the physician. There is a supposititious reflex action upon the whole digestive and nervous apparatus from the strain imposed upon a defective or ill-adapted vision. The argument is supported in another way by the case of Wagner. In March, 1854, we find the great musician

writing : " This having to make a clean copy kills me. . . . . The continual writing tires me to such an extent that I feel quite ill and lose the inclination for real work." Sick headaches, sleeplessness, melancholy, the fear of death with its frequent contradictory concomitant, the resolve to commit suicide, were Wagner's lifelong companions, until his second wife began to act as his amanuensis, and he was no longer driven to " the maddening eye-labour." There is no trace of specific complaint of all these troubles in his later years. Carlyle's Cyclopean bellowings, spasmodic writhings enduring as long as sixty hours : " never the smallest help affordable ; oh, what pain, what pain ! " all go quiet as old age approaches and presbyopia sets in. And what is presbyopia ? It is that condition of the optic organs in persons advanced in life which makes it impossible to discern minute objects near at hand, whilst it leaves the distant vision unimpaired or perhaps even improved.

The conclusion that a general disturbance of the nerve centres may result from continued eye-strain is reasonable enough, but Mr. Gould pushes his idea beyond all rational limits. It is known, for example, that Browning endured intense pain from headaches, and that these were brought on by reading, and were intensified by reading in a recumbent position. But it is a little startling to be asked to believe that his " naturally rugged and English intellect " was directed to metaphysical and ethical subtleties and his expertness as a versifier almost destroyed by this cause. If the author of " Biographic Clinics " wishes for a reason for the occasionally contemptuous reception of a book which has a real value of its own, he may find it in this and similar exaggerations of his case. The worth of his suggestion is that the organ

which causes all the troubles enumerated and many more is not itself the seat of suffering. Its defect may produce countless forms of disorder without the eye itself being apparently very much the worse for it. We find that Darwin could only work an hour or so a day, and that the rest of his time was passed in hydropathic packs, or spent in dreary trudgings about the famous "sandwalk." The acts of reading and writing brought furious agonies to Nietzsche, and his sufferings at last hunted him into paralysis. Herbert Spencer was condemned to limit his hours of labour very closely, and found in ocular rest his only relief. In most of the cases cited it is to be noticed that there is no specific complaint as to any weakness or inefficiency of the eye itself. And yet it is invariably when the eye is employed in working persistently at short range that all the symptoms of torture and despair and lassitude are at their strongest.

Bringing Mr. Gould's argument to the simplest terms, it comes to this: Dyspepsia and all its train of horrors, when they accompany much eye-work, are more efficiently to be treated by the optician than the physician. Exercise and rest are at the outside no more than palliatives. Drugs and water cures are often harmful rather than otherwise. Introduce two perfectly adapted pairs of spectacles into the famous home of domestic unhappiness at Chelsea, and Jane Welsh—minus her sick headaches and influenzas—blossoms into the sweetest and gayest of household companions, whilst Carlyle himself, with that terrible rat banished from the pit of his stomach and the cynic gloom from his soul, turns out to be the apostle of hope and geniality. Now, it is extremely probable that there is a truth at the bottom of this idea, and if that be so there is alleviation in sight for much

needless suffering, not only amongst men and women of genius but amongst all the countless crowds who pursue occupations which create a constant strain upon the sight and whose peptic processes are notably out of order. There are hundreds of thousands of such cases, as the manufacturers of patent medicines know full well, and if such a means of relief is to be found the sooner we set our surgeons and physicians to the scientific study of applied optics the better. And whilst it may not be admitted that Mr. Gould has quite made out his case, it may certainly be allowed that he has offered a strong presumption in its favour.

### ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

STARTING on an excursion into the country the other day from St. Pancras, I found upon a bookstall there a paper-bound copy of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "*Aurora Leigh*" priced at sixpence. I bought it, and made myself oblivious of a hundred miles of English country. I am almost afraid to say how long it is since I last opened its pages, but I remember a time when I should willingly have accepted a challenge to cap any one of its lines with the line next following. To be sure the lines number twelve thousand or thereabouts. In my sixpenny copy there are one hundred and twenty-six pages with an average of ninety-seven or eight. But then at the age at which the born lover of books begins to read fine verse with real enjoyment and with that spiritual intelligence which outruns the mere verbal understanding—and can sometimes, indeed, afford to dispense with it—he reads with every faculty of the mind and soul and eye. He makes an unconscious

picture of the printed page, and sees it suspended in the air before him. He saturates himself alike in sense and sound, and the beautiful music goes singing in his mind to the spirit ditties of no tone, until it is become so much a part of him that a whole generation later its record shows clear again—like secret writing exposed to heat—at the merest glow of the original flame. In point of mere volume this “*Aurora Leigh*” is a prodigious book for a poem—only one-fifth less in length than “*Paradise Lost*” and “*Paradise Regained*” together. Too lengthy and too diffused, therefore, to be of equal value everywhere, but, taken in the large, a fine phrase in art, a great phrase in the history of the eternal conflict and eternal reconciliation of the sexes ; a memorable phrase, even, in the story of social ethics.

I am not going to review “*Aurora Leigh*. ” It is a little late in the day for any enterprise of that kind. But at the outset I desire to note as one of the most cheering signs now obvious to the student of the times we live in the fact that there is a sixpenny public for a book like this. It is an age since we were able to buy any one of Shakespeare’s plays for a penny, and amidst the infinite gifts of chaff and draff, and worse, which the cheap Press has bestowed upon us, we have found much for which we have a right to be thankful. But it is not wonderful that Shakespeare should appeal to a penny public, for he is everybody’s heritage—his genius is the great compulsive force in literature which draws to it all forms and varieties of intelligence in any degree worthy of the name. Mrs. Browning—though, perhaps, she rose as high in mental achievement as any of her sex—is not merely of a lower order of genius, but does not come within calling distance of the Shakespearian range.

There are some things so true that it looks at once unkind and absurd to write them, and this is one of them. But the point is that a writer whose genius burnt rather to a fine intense flame than to the broad and genial glow which mankind finds most attractive and inviting should be able to command so wide an audience as the issue—for profit, and as a business speculation—of so cheap an edition of her work necessarily implies.

This is the form of criticism which, of all others, Mrs. Browning herself most passionately resented. In all her work the same protest finds an occasional utterance, but in “Aurora Leigh” it is a good moiety of her gospel. She demands to be judged—not as a woman, but simply as an artist. If on the highest plane, and in the loftiest company, she failed, she asked the meed of failure :

Perhaps a woman's soul  
Aspires and not creates ! Yet, we aspire,  
And yet I'll try out your perhapses, sir ;  
And if I fail . . . why, burn me up my straw  
Like other false works—I'll not ask for grace !

There is something very finely courageous here, and it is merely impossible not to admire and respect it. But it is just as impossible to accept the conviction it involves, which is that, given the fitting constitution, and the right environment of the woman's soul, it has an equal mastery with the man's. There is a tinge of bitterness sometimes—always a large disdain :

Nature's self, you say,  
Has scorned to put her music in my mouth  
Because a woman's.  
    . . . Here if heads  
That hold a rhythmic thought must ache perforce  
For my part I choose headaches.

I perceive  
The headache is too noble for my sex ;  
You think the heartache would sound decenter  
Since that's the woman's special, proper ache.

In a nature less large, less generous, less full of all lovable enthusiasms than that of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the reader would take all this for petulance, but it merits a better name. She is undoubtedly her own heroine, but she has chosen a form which permits her to dramatise her beliefs, and the petulance belongs to the character as dramatically conceived, and not to the writer.

But the cause to which she weds and welds herself in so great a heat? What of the cause? Here is as large a woman's heart as ever beat, as fine a brain as ever inspired a woman's voice, a nature altogether so rich and lovable that when the great poet whom she left widowed wrote his one immortal line about her—"O lyric love, half angel and half bird"—he found half a world in a pang of sympathy with him; and, when everything is said, the one thing which gives her a place secure in our affections is not that she is an artist—which is the sole point on which she petitioned our judgment—but just that she is so intensely and essentially a woman. It is the femininity against which she so passionately appealed which gives her her passport to enduring fame. We hear the same cry from women who are not worthy to unloose her shoe-latchets, and, coming from them, it excites none of the respectful and affectionate regret which it inspires when we hear it from the lips of Mrs. Browning. Its shrill impertinences weary us and no more, and they do not weary us the less because they are often raised in the attempted justification of a surface imitation of the worst faults of art when practised as some men practise it of whom we are not proud. There can be no truth got at in respect to this matter until women recognise the fact that they have a sphere of their own outside which it is danger-

ous for themselves to stray. Of course, everybody is aware beforehand of the scorn and impatience with which that doctrine is bound to be received in certain quarters. "Oh, the sphere! the sphere!" But no sneer, however impatient, removes a fact. A woman can be an artist, and a great artist, but she can no more make herself masculine in art than she can make herself masculine in gender. And, as the great example we have before us proves, she is most an artist where she is most a woman, and least an artist where she tries to wear the panoply of the male.

There are forms of art which are distinctly feminine, and in saying that I cast no glance in the direction of pretty water-colours or nursery poems, or irreproachable fiction written for perusal in girls' schools. But there is one art of the woman and another of the man. I take examples in extreme. What would the world say of a female Rabelais? Or of a male Mrs. Hemans? The humour of the one would be more than repulsive, and the grace and charm of the other merely namby-pamby. Who would choose to be a male Marianne Farningham? There are scores of men who write verse which, *qua* verse, is no better, but the spider web of the male is not the spider web of the female. It is not a difference in art, which, where both samples are mediocre, is not worth discussion. It is merely a difference in sex, which tells in poetry, fiction, painting, sculpture, just as it tells in singing. We have male sopranis and contralti, just as now and again we find a female basso profundo. But they are all abnormal and there never was one of them who came near to the virtues of the thing they mimic. And even if they did we should be less content than with the real thing. The feeling that a characteristic or a faculty is out

of place would still be with us and would mar our pleasure.

A good many of the advance guard of that contingent which is content to describe itself as strong-minded find a justification for their attitude in Mrs. Browning's pages, which is only one more proof of the old truth that even the best intention may be turned to foolish uses. Mrs. Browning so truly justified woman's place in art that it is a regret to her truest readers that she thought it worth her while to make that place a question for controversy. The writer of that noble lyric which begins "Of all the thoughts of God"; of "The Cry of the Children"; of "Hector in the Garden"; of the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," to say nothing of "A Drama of Exile" and "Aurora Leigh" itself, had not the faintest little need in the world to go about and *argue* that a woman could be a poet. She proved it by the mere fact of being a very great poet herself. And where she fails—as she does fail sometimes—it is invariably where she forces herself into a conscious rivalry with those who were no more than her peers when she was at her natural height. She says somewhere in "Aurora Leigh" "these woman's trailing garments shall not trip me up." They never did. She wore them so that they were a part of her. In the bloomer and the pantalette she is a less adorable figure, and, as the event proves, is a world too conscious of her feet for steady and prosperous walking.

Mrs. Browning's fortune was to be born into what she calls the "new, just, administrative times" in which the principal objects presented to the mind were the first beginnings of a sort of Christian Socialism, modified from the original designs of Fourier; the first beginnings of the movement towards popular

education ; the first beginnings of those researches and speculations which, among many other things, have brought our modern materialism into being ; and the first beginnings of modern spiritualism. In brief, she lived in one of those eras of stress and unrest which herald changes in thought and social form. She had a word to say upon most of these. " Fourier's void, and Comte is dwarfed, and Cabet puerile." Her gospel here is that you cannot elevate mankind by systems, but only by human sympathy and contact. The man who is most man and who has the tenderest and most understanding heart " works best for man—as God in Nazareth." The end of all her searching is that art is much, but that love is more. Love is God, is Heaven, is all—the only potent instrument for man's salvation. Well, it is a sentimental doctrine, but it is not incapable of being put to practical uses. It misses originality, because it is the essence of a doctrine which was preached first nearly two thousand years ago. It marks no epoch, because the doctrine will still be preached two thousand years hence, whether in association with dogma or without it. But here Mrs. Browning was of service in her own time, and here in an age in which the most mournful features of that time are not only perpetuated but marked in stronger accent—the greed, the frivolity, the class differences, the will to remodel humanity by machinery—she has her uses yet, and always will have them, so long as the lesson she teaches remains unlearned.

## THE CARLYLE CONTROVERSY.

WE have it on the authority of many Northern Sagas that a pretty practice of cutting open the body of a fallen enemy and plucking out his viscera for public display by way of establishing the fact of triumph over him was in favour with the old Norse warriors. The trophy of heart, lungs, and liver was known as "the blood-eagle," and Tennyson in one of his later poems finds in it a simile for the ghoul-like gossip in which our modern generations love to indulge about their eminent and noble dead. There is a rapier-thrust of wrathful satire in the poet's parable, where, after his picture of the loathly old crone who "gabbled as she groped in the dead," he adds: "Her name was 'Reverence' here below." The controversy which is now raging with regard to certain highly insignificant facts about the marital relations of Thomas Carlyle and his wife affords a fine example of that strange public taste which revels in petty and unprofitable detail about the lives of the great. It really cannot matter very much to the average feeder on personal paragraphs whether Jane Welsh Carlyle were jealous of Lady Ashburton or no; or whether she or her rather saturnine and difficult husband were most in the wrong in those domestic tiffs and troubles which seem too frequently to have disturbed the harmony of their home.

Carlyle has been at rest a good many years now, and it might fairly have been hoped that by this time his own confessions of his own shortcomings might have

been embalmed in a sort of classic peace. In the last sad, dark days of a life which was never very joyous he sat down deliberately to offer what atonement was then possible for what he conceived to be his own error. That he was not in the mood to disguise anything, that his heart accused him bitterly, and that he found the only release from his own upbraiding in an absolutely plenary confession is beyond doubt. That he has, after all, so very little to confess, and that he made so much of it seems to establish a defence which he was very far from seeking. For when Carlyle's hyperbolical self-searchings and overstrained self-reproachings are all done with, they amount to this only : that he had failed in outward consideration and tenderness towards one whom he had dearly loved —that he had misunderstood much which he now saw with clearer eyes, and had neglected much which now wore the aspect of duty.

It must needs be remembered that with a passionate desire for truth and a great impatience for all kinds of mental trickery and self-deceit Carlyle united an hysterical one-sidedness. Whatever else may be said of him either as a thinker or a stylist, he will never be charged with an excess of reserve or self-control. He felt habitually, and habitually expressed himself, at white heat, and whatever he saw, he saw through magnifying glasses. His power lay mainly in his intensity. He writes of his dyspepsia in terms which would have befitted the vulture-torn Prometheus. The gloomy, lonely, grim old man sits down in his last days to frame an indictment against himself. All the picturesque and exaggerated elements of style are still at his command, and he lashes himself unsparingly. The impression which is carried away by the careful reader who has familiarised himself with the master's method

of thought and the strangely vivid lightnings and rolling thunders of his style is merely that on the whole he had not been very well qualified to make any woman happy. One knows that his wife had a temperament about as vivacious as his own, that she had a scathing wit, that, like himself, she was a physical sufferer, and, like himself again, lamentably nervose, and it is the easiest thing in the world to understand how two such people could love and esteem each other profoundly, and at the same time be occasionally incapable of domestic peace. That a real love and a real esteem did exist between them in spite of any and all disturbances no reader of the whole mass of authentic literature, which has grown up around them, can reasonably doubt. Carlyle was not merely a man of vivid temper, but he was careless and unobservant, and he was not illuminated with respect to many things of importance to his wife's domestic welfare, until, after her death, he read her private letters and memorials. Then a dreadful remorse fell upon him, a remorse of which a man of inferior nature would have been incapable.

It is at first difficult to apportion the blame for this most unfortunate controversy. It is contended, not very justly, by the champions of Carlyle that Froude's biography dethroned him from the lofty place he merited, and that the historian played the part of a literary ghoul. First of all, we have Carlyle presented to us by his friends and partisans as if he had been the victim of a gross and wicked libel. This leads by natural sequence to the disembowelling of Froude, who really and truly offered no such picture of his imagined victim as he was said to have done. Then, with two great reputations already mangled, we are invited by Mrs. Alexander Carlyle and Sir James

Crichton-Browne to believe that Jane Welsh Carlyle was practically a mad woman—that she suffered from a “masked insanity” which made happiness in the same house with her a sheer impossibility. And now, in the current pages of the *Contemporary Review*, Mr. Ronald McNeill makes it appear that Carlyle’s niece behaved in a singularly selfish and exacting fashion towards Froude; and so the contagion of libel and imputed libel spreads until scarcely any person concerned in the history comes out with clean hands. The great writer himself is held up to our view as a petty tyrant. His literary executor is denounced as a traitor and as having wilfully garbled the evidence entrusted to his charge. Mrs. Carlyle is an irresponsible and impossible person who suffers from “masked insanity,” whatever that may be. Finally, we have the picture of Froude “worried beyond endurance” by the groundless claims to Carlyle’s literary remains presented by his niece.

There seems to be very little room for doubt that each and every one of these charges contains a more or less odious injustice. I have used the word “finally,” but without much reason, for it appears that more recriminations and counter-recriminations are in store for us. The facts in themselves are infinitely less painful than the gloss which has been put upon them, and Carlyle’s partisans are themselves mainly responsible for the ignoble and degrading squabble which is now being conducted over the graves of the unfortunates concerned. Nothing less than a great love and a great sorrow could have moved Carlyle to assume the whole blame for the broken music of his married life. When his loss was fresh upon him, and whilst he had not yet realised the nature and extent of his wife’s sufferings, he wrote these words, or words

to this effect, for I must quote from memory : " For forty years she cheered me in all of noble I did or attempted, and the light of my life has gone out." In his home letters, which were intended for his wife's eyes alone, he displays a tenderness which is in absolute contrast to the common idea of him, and her answers are full of womanly solicitude for him. Wordsworth's aspiration was for

A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food.

Without disloyalty to a woman of unusual charm, penetration, and wit, it may be allowed that Mrs Carlyle transcended this modest hope. And with no disloyalty to Carlyle himself it may be admitted that he was scarcely the ideal comrade for her at close quarters. The ironic Bartle Massey said of Mr. and Mrs. Poyser that they were pins-and-needles and pin-cushion respectively. In the Carlyle *ménage* both husband and wife were at once pins-and-needles and bundles of sensitive nerve-fibre. But they loved each other fondly, and each had the clearest appreciation of the higher qualities of the other. Why should the world be invited to puddle about in the record of their misunderstandings ? They loved one another, and they were too well matched to be well mated. It is one of the commonest, if one of the saddest, of human experiences, and it is intruded upon us here only because these particular sufferers were in other respects uplifted very high above the general run of human kind.

As for the charge that Froude wantonly betrayed his trust, and put forth to the world an egregious libel on the man whom he professed to esteem, it may suffice for people who are inclined to be fair-minded to read a few of the traducer's published words.

He left the world at last, having never spoken, never written a word in which he did not believe with his whole heart; never stained his conscience by a deliberate act which he could regret to remember.

A life of single-minded effort to do right, and that only; of constant truthfulness in word and deed.

The most malicious scrutiny will search in vain for a serious blemish.

His wages will be the love and honour of the whole English race who read his books and know his history. If his writings are forgotten, he has left in his life a model of simplicity and uprightness which few will ever equal and none will excel.

To write thus is to take a somewhat roundabout way to the cowardly assassination of a friend's good name. That Froude was not a monument of discretion may be true enough, but if he revealed some things which might well have been relegated to obscurity, he presented to our gaze a figure essentially dignified and worshipful. It was the criticism vouchsafed to Froude's book which represented Carlyle's memory as being desecrated by it. The book itself reveals a tragedy in which the solitary and contrite old man himself was not the least sympathetic or the less pitiable actor.

The charges against Mrs. Alexander Carlyle are wholly sordid, and had far better have been left unmade. Rightly or wrongly she conceived herself to have a grievance. The fact that Froude yielded to her may either be held to give colour to the belief that he acknowledged the justice of her claim, or to indicate an unusual generosity on his side. The whole question is obscure, and might well be left to rest in its obscurity. The point to be urged is that a fair and candid examination of the merits of the whole case tends to exonerate from serious blame the whole of the principals concerned in it. Carlyle was inconsiderate and hasty, and hard to live with. Mrs. Carlyle was sometimes exacting and sometimes implacable.

Both were chronic sufferers. But each was estimable far and far beyond the average of men and women, and each one knew this much of the other. Mr. Augustine Birrell thinks the controversy has resulted in the formation of opposing bands of man's champions and woman's champions. It should not do so by right. The whole story is one which calls for a sympathetic understanding, and for my own part I find nothing but regret for the storm which has been raised about it, and nothing but pity for two sorely-tried souls whose innate nobility of nature failed to save them from a form of misunderstanding which is common in a thousand households in which the splendid virtues of the Carlyles are unknown—the heroism, the rooted constancy, the generosity which, apart from the light of genius, make their record at least as beautiful as it was sorrowful.

### WRITER AND READER.

I have been trying all day long to arrive at a conclusion as to the right relations of a writer towards his readers ; or, rather, I have been trying to express conclusions which I supposed to be already formed. And now that my table is littered with elaborate beginnings I have awakened to the reason for a lurking sense of dissatisfaction which has been with me from the first. What I have really wanted to do has been to say certain things personal to myself, and the attempt to generalise on a particular case has made me feel as if I were walking in fetters. An access of courage frees me, and I shall go on with no further touch of *mauvaise honte*. I am led at once to the very heart of what I wanted to say. I have ever

been from time to time haunted by one doubt. Is there or is there not a sort of immodesty in the mental attitude of the man who week by week, year in, year out, sits down to instruct some hundreds of thousands of his fellow-creatures as to how they ought to think and feel about this, that, or the other matter, and who, in the course of half a dozen years, deals with a practical infinity of things? Sometimes it will happen that the professional writer for the Press may find himself called upon to deal with a question with which he has a lifelong familiarity, but this cannot be his fortune always. If he is at all honestly equipped for his business, he has thought in his time about a very considerable heap of questions, and has done a great deal of promiscuous reading. I am not taking the specialist into account at all. He has no room for dubieties. He either knows his business or does not know it. He may be a modest specialist, or he may be very much the reverse, but there can be no doubt in his own mind as to his right to crow from his own dunghill. He knows very well whether he has the real freedom of that eminence or no.

But with the universal provider it is different. He must hold himself in readiness to examine and to pronounce upon anything and everything in the whole wide world of opinion, discovery, and invention, and it must happen often that when he has done his best, a riper and better conclusion than that at which he has succeeded in arriving will rise up in his own mind and reprove him. There is one point on which it would be absolutely unfair to accuse him, though the accusation would be based in all but the most phenomenal instances on an indisputable truth. It is simply impossible that he should know at first hand all the matters of fact he lays before his readers. But he

has to preserve some sense of literary form in his work, and it would be utterly destructive of this if he stopped scrupulously to indicate the source of every newly-acquired scrap of information. Nor would it be of service to the reader if he encountered on occasion a confession to the effect that the person who is now instructing him had only the vaguest possible idea, if any, with regard to this particular theme last week. Any honest and capable journalist will acknowledge that he has known a thousand things—journalist fashion—which he has now forgotten. One nail knocks out another. As Dr. Johnson said, there are two kinds of knowledge. There is the knowledge you carry about with you, and there is the knowledge of where to go in search of the knowledge you have not got.

There is a sense in which one comes to regard oneself as a sort of digester, *pro bono publico*, and in which one does discern a certain limited sort of undoubtable usefulness. Here is a crude mass of pabulum for the mind, much of it tough, some of it innutritious, some of it unpalatable. The working journalist lays hold of it, passes it through the mincing machine, through the digestive apparatus of a hot brain, draws off a kind of Lemco, Oxo, or Bovril, flavours it as best he can to suit your taste, serves it in his handsomest way, and leaves you to absorb it in the modest certainty that he is, to the limited extent of that enterprise, your benefactor. There are a good many cooks in the public kitchens nowadays who expend much real art on this comparatively humble work. Now and then—but only now and then—the concentrated essence of literature is itself literature, and the mere bowlful of nutriment is worth a great deal more than the whole horned creature

from whose carcass it was extracted. But that is only where the cook happens to sauce the extract with genius, a condiment which is not at every honest journalist's disposal.

It is not where one is acting as a translator or condenser of the thoughts of other men—where he is frankly to his own apprehension a conduit and no more—that the doubt I have tried to indicate rises in the mind. But candidly to make the personal issue of it here which it is to my own mind always, a great and constant responsibility lies upon the man who attempts to form or to influence the thought of his contemporaries in respect to those serious questions which are sometimes touched upon in these columns. Either the writer is a chip in porridge, as the local folk used to say in my childhood when they wanted to describe a person who was of no consequence to anybody, or he is in greater or smaller measure a force, determining more or less the character and way of thinking of some more or less considerable number of live people, whose characters and ways of thinking are of the extremest importance to themselves. It would seem that a man who ventures to occupy such a position can scarcely fail to appear to arrogate to himself an amount of authority, and, indeed, a general personal excellence, which in reality he is far from desiring to assume. Unless I would fall into an offensive canting humility I cannot for ever be proclaiming that I am neither saint nor seer, nor prophet, nor anointed teacher. Yet I must perforce, on the other hand, put the best side of myself in constant evidence. In the secret recesses of my own heart I may not be the least little bit of a hypocrite, and yet if any of my readers knew me as I know myself, what an easy and what a withering

thing would it be to lay a finger on any one of a thousand lines and ask, "Is this noble sentiment yours, sir?"

I may find a real solace in the thought : "He gave the people of his best : His worst he kept, his best he gave." That is the bounden duty of the man who habitually puts himself into close mental contact with a great crowd of people to whom he is personally unknown. The truth is not less the truth, though it should come through the lips of a liar. Valour is no less honourable because a poltroon proclaims its value. Chastity, honour, and sobriety would survive the praises of a drunken helot. The disreputable old parson who told his flock not to do as he did, but to do as he said, was not all disreputable. The candour of the saying saves him from our sterner strictures, and, apart from that, the dog had humour in him. There have been men of the inordinate vanity of Rousseau who have impudently bared the worst of themselves before the world, or, with a refinement of hypocrisy, have pretended to do so whilst withholding the things of which they were genuinely ashamed. Any competent literary craftsman could write a book of confessions which would leave him looking like a holy angel, but most literary craftsmen would have to lie a good deal by implication in doing it.

But the aspect of the question with regard to which one does most seriously take oneself to task is that which relates to one's own attempt to influence the thought of the time. If I am wrong the fact that I do most solemnly believe myself to be in the right will be of little avail to those whom I may mislead. The one thing about which I am absolutely certain is that it is the business of every man to find and verify his own beliefs for himself in so far as that is possible to

his most strenuous endeavour. And whilst I preach the doctrine that the crime of crimes is to accept and wear another man's mental raiment at second-hand, I am occasionally impelled to look at my own gaberdine and to acknowledge that it is a thing of shreds and patches, with a back piece cut out of this sage's mantle, and one side of a sleeve taken from this seer's rag-bag, and its unfellow-like fellow from t'other's singing robe. One would have preferred to go about more handsomely in a garment made expressly for one's own wearing, like—like—upon my word, I can't think of the man whose coat has not so much as a patch of another man's cloth in it, unless I name some one of the supreme half-dozen of the world, and even they have borrowed something, and seem, indeed, to make a rather free use of one another's wardrobes.

' Yet what folly is this? Who demands that we shall all be original in thinking? We shall mostly think the thoughts of other people till we die. It is like breathing an atmosphere which is common to all men, or feeding on a harvest which lies spread for the general use. The whole world's stock of thinking is accessible to most of us to-day. You can live in a miasmatic atmosphere if you like, or you can get into regions of clear air.

To hark back to the beginning—to that question of the right relation of the writer to his readers. To some he will appear as if he were groping forlornly in darkened and marshy places. To some he will have the air of the blind leading the blind. To some he will look like a strong man bent on a strong purpose walking with assured footsteps on a plain highway. And whatsoever he may be, whether among the wisest of mankind or their foolishest, he is certain to encounter these startling differences of judgment.

If any sense of his own immodesty in his flourishing of the tutor's ferule should assail him he may find a partial shelter in the fact that he is one of a crowd, a good many of whom are manifestly unfit for their office, and have no reverence or regard for it. And if there is any danger of growing spiritually cockahoop on this ground, he may save himself by the obvious reflection that a great many who are more learned and who live better lives than he does are at once his comrades and his masters in his work. Literature has become a trade, and we who follow it take our thoughts and emotions to market just as naturally as if they were bacon or crockery ware. Some danger of deterioration—not only in the product, but in the vendor—there cannot fail to be. In those simpler days when literature had its beginnings there was always some great impulse which drove a man to the expression of himself. In the oldest book in the world you find the writer engaged in the contemplation of his own soul and its relations with the God-head of that soul's imagining. You can fancy some far-away predecessor of his sitting at his tent door under the stars—his heart burning with awe and wonder at some primal thought—framing it into words, making it articulate, and finding that the words make music, beating at it in flushes of feeling, profoundly exultant, mournful, sweet, along the whole gamut of breast and brain, until, behold ! a new thing, a song—the first vocalisation of the soul of man.

That is how you get literature—first through some great inward impulse, and then by a labour so intensely loving and enthralled that it does not know itself for labour. Real literature will always be produced in that fashion—or after that manner, at whatever interval of difference in the dynamics of

emotion. And we have made a traffic of this sacred thing, and turn out our shoddy imitations of it by the bushel. And when we are only just a bit worthy of even this poor work we feel sometimes a kind of weary disdain for it. Then "*Sursum Corda!*!" say we, and turn to the loom again, and weave, being careful not to use any downright rotten thread for warp and woof, or such poisoned stuff as may make a Nessus-torture of the fools' caps we are turning out for the market. Ah, me! Right relations between writer and reader! What are they? Shall we say a cautious daring on the one side and a watchful allowance on the other? Why not an actual candour, a "There you are! That's how I see the thing, and after looking at it with such eyes as God has given me, I can see it in no other way. Do you now look at it, and examine it for what it's worth, and if it's wrong for you, have nothing to do with it."

## ÉMILE ZOLA.\*

WHEN an event of great public importance happens—or an event of such a striking and dramatic interest as to pass for one of great importance—we moderns are at first singularly greedy in our desire to know all about it. After an orgie of curiosity and emotion we become sated, and turn away with weariness from even the most inviting of scandal, wonder, terror, or excitement. Later on, if the theme is big enough to endure, we return with a more rational appetite for it. I cannot tell whether the tragic death of Émile Zola, under the immediate influence

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\* This was written in 1902.

of which I write, and with the news of which the whole world is at this present moment ringing, will have ceased to be a theme of popular interest at the time at which these lines are printed. I hope not, and in that hope I will try to set down some personal memories of the man himself, and some conclusions as to the work he did. I am not presuming on anything so absurd as a pretence of intellectual equality when I say that in the craft we both followed he had no sincerer opponent than myself and that I always recognised in him my exact temperamental antithesis. It was only in such pages as those of "L'Attaque du Moulin," "Une Page d'Amour," and "Le Rêve" that his work was really tolerable to me. And since I still hold a rooted antipathy to his literary methods as displayed in the great bulk of his work, I shall not be charged with partisanship if I express my belief that France has lost in him one of the bravest, most loyal, and most justice-loving souls she ever gave to the world.

The literary antipathy of which I have spoken would have sufficed to keep in restraint to the end of the chapter any desire I might have had to make a personal acquaintance with Zola, no matter how remarkable and predominant his figure, but when the famous letter of accusation appeared in the pages of the *Aurore* my sentiments regarding him, in common, as I believe, with those of hundreds of thousands of men and women the world over, underwent a sudden change. I had taken a profound interest in the cause which Zola espoused with such striking effect, and I knew as much about it as it was possible for a man to know to whom only the ordinary sources of information were open. I had been amongst the earliest of those who strove to arouse the English and American

Press to a knowledge of the judicial crime which was being perpetrated in France. So it happened that when at the time of the great trial at the Palais d'Injustice I found myself in Paris as the temporary representative of a London newspaper engaged to watch the case, Zola received me with marked cordiality, and I had ample opportunity of observing the man whose literary aspect I hated, and of seeing how he behaved under circumstances of great stress and strain.

The man who had written "*J'accuse*" had given his proofs so far as moral courage was concerned. He had thrown down the gauntlet to a nation. The French Army is the French idol, and he had defied the very *élite* of it, and had charged it with conspiracy and perjury. He had arraigned the Courts of Justice as the subservient slaves of wickedness in high places. He had scattered his own popularity at a breath and for ever. And he had done all this for truth's sake, and the honour of his country. It was a great deed, but it was not inconceivable that it had been done in a moment of exaltation, and that the doer of it might not be able to face the storm which he himself had raised. He had been a fighter all his life, and had grown thick-skinned against obloquy and disdain. But now he had put his body into peril—not only of imprisonment, but of personal violence from the mob, and he stood to lose the greater part of an unusually hard-won fortune. There is a form of courage which may animate a man in his study. It is another form of the same high quality which enables him to face the howl of popular execration in the streets, and to show an equable front to the jeers of a well-dressed and fashionable people in the Courts, packed against him to a pince-nez and

a petticoat. Zola faced it all. I saw him and conversed with him constantly during the stupendous days of that farce-tragedy of which he was the central figure, and I can testify to the spirit in which he played his part in it.

It was not, of course, the spirit of cold calm on which we phlegmatic English pride ourselves, for he was half of French and half of Italian blood, and race has its differences. But through it all there was a lofty contempt of any consequences which might befall himself; a disdain of danger which would in itself have added to the danger in which he stood had it not been for the restraints put upon him by his friends, and, what was perhaps most remarkable in such a man, a rigorous repression of the royal indignation which supported him at any and every time and place in which he could not express it without loss of dignity. He was not cool. He was at a white heat of rage and pity and patriotism, but except in the society of those to whom he gave his confidence he showed no sign of it, and he never once in the presence of that huge conspiracy of injustice betrayed the contempt he felt for the long line of liars marshalled day by day against him, or the venal judges who were making a travesty of the law. He sat in his place for the most part outwardly impassive, and never losing dignity, whilst the presiding judge stonewalled the wicket of justice against Labori's forensic bowling, day after day and hour after hour, with that eternal "*La question ne sera pas posée.*" Even when that melodramatic villain Esterhazy turned his back on the counsel for the defence, and the Court upheld him in his insolence, Zola, knowing what he knew, and what all the world knows now, kept silence. Even when the scarcely less distinguished Henri confided his

professional secrets to his cap, Zola, knowing what he knew, kept silence. It was a triumph of personal dignity, and it deserves to be remembered. I need hardly say that in an Englishman this passivity would have been less remarkable, but we are to remember that we are surveying the conduct of an Italian Frenchman, who was burning with a sense of impotence at organised injustice.

I do not know whether on ordinary themes and in ordinary circumstances Zola was counted as a great conversationalist, but, inspired by the *Affaire Dreyfus* and its long-drawn and dreadful history, he was certainly by far the most eloquent private talker to whom I have ever listened. I dare say that in our first interview, I, as a novel and sympathetic listener, found him at his best, and that to me phrases of disdain and satire and pathos and description, which may have been stereotyped to others, had the charm of newness. We were alone, and he poured out an entrancing description of the public degradation of Dreyfus. Was it M. Taine who said that Carlyle's "*Revolution*" was history seen by lightning? This was like a chapter of the "*Revolution*" read by lightning. Incidentally it illuminated his whole method of work, for when I asked him at the close of this tremendous narrative, which was packed thick with detail, whether he had been an eye-witness of the scene, he answered with an apparent surprise in the negative. It had not been until long after that poignant ceremony of disgrace that he had begun to take an interest in the *Affaire*, but he had read countless descriptions, and had talked with many who had been present. He had borrowed this incident from one, so it seemed, that from another. It had ended in the production, in his own mind, of a picture

so homogeneous and complete that he was able to flash it on to mine with such a precision of effect that I felt as if I myself had witnessed every fact from start to finish, and had heard the indignant despair of the convict's "I am innocent" and the unappeasable yellings of the crowd.

Later on I induced Zola to talk of his own work, and chiefly of its purposes. It was impossible not to recognise the fact that he regarded himself as a man with a mission, as one on whom a stern and necessary duty had devolved. The man was at least sincere to himself and his convictions. He told me in a phrase which I reported at the time that France appeared to him like a great suffering angel afflicted with a malady "which only a cruel cautery could cure." He had endeavoured to apply that cautery in his books. There is no doubt that the France he depicted suffered gravely, but there were many who regarded Zola himself as one of the most malignant symptoms of her disorder, who believed that what he offered as a cure was a hideous aggravation of the disease. But that he worked honestly and with a single mind is with me an article of faith with which I do not know how to part. And here arises the most serious of all questions. How far is any individual justified in despising and defying those conventions which have been established by the modesty of mankind? There is a divinity of shame, which is one of the best products of civilisation. To violate it is to commit the most abominable of outrages. But we must define between modesty—a virtue which no man dare undervalue—and prudery—one of the pettiest of the smaller vices of small minds. It was a part of Zola's deliberately adopted plan to make a mock of prudery. But though prudery is a petty vice it is on the borders of a beauti-

ful virtue, and the operator cut too deep. His honesty of purpose may excuse him, so far as the question of personal morality goes, but unfortunately it cannot mitigate the cankerous quality of a thousand episodes in his pages. It is not an over-nice mind alone which finds "Nana" and "La Terre" essentially nasty. Granted in its entirety the plea of intellectual honesty, and still one cannot fail to find that the mental apparatus of the author of these abominations is out of gear.

The simple truth for the sane-minded critic appears to be that the work to which Zola set himself with so savage and so prolonged an energy was cast in a mistaken form. Zola conducted an argument, the broad effect of which was that the world for the most part is a very vile and cruel place. It may or may not be true that the balance of evil inclines in the direction in which he believed he saw it to incline, but to pretend that you can prove a fact by the narration of a fable is absurd on the face of it. A writer of fiction has his puppets in his hand. It is he who endows them with their characteristics, and places them in such circumstances as he chooses. You may write a novel to prove anything whatever, and when you have done with it you will have proved only that you have chosen the wrong instrument for use in a discussion. You have shown how a set of imaginary people conduct themselves in imaginary circumstances; people and circumstances being alike under your absolute control; and in doing this with whatever measure of sincerity and genius you have revealed a point of view. You have not passed beyond the *ipse dixit*, the "This is my opinion." Nor, however carefully you may have verified your facts beforehand in a special case or a set of special cases,

can you pretend that you have taken the true view of mankind at large.

It is not in this respect alone that Zola, as a typical example of the novelist with a purpose, fell into error. A great part of his work is pathological. The great "Rougon-Macquart" series depends for its continuity on the thread of heredity. The writer of fiction is compelled by the exigencies of his craft to deal with his fable as if it were a solid truth. The man of science, on the other hand, is compelled to admit a certain element of doubt on almost every side. Thus we have presented to us the curious spectacle of cock-sureness on the part of the casual student whose only guarantee is a prepossession of opinion, and of a grave hesitation on the part of the scientific student to whom a prepossession is the one thing ruinous to his inquiry. To draw a second illustration from the game of cricket, just as the man who is bent upon a special stroke is lost, so is a logician. There is a truth in the doctrine of hereditary influences, but it is not the inexorable law which Zola seems to see. The spectator of his game sees him, as it were, hitting every ball to square leg, and this fact reduces his score just as it detracts from the value of his play in a scientific sense.

Beyond all this comes another and a still more important question. Is the pathology of the sexes a matter to be freely treated by a popular writer? Zola thought so. He believed that facts familiar to the medical world might with advantage be made known to the young men and maidens of the world at large. My own belief is and always must be that he was wrong. Merely to know that I have a majority at my back is not at any time or in any cause to make myself feel much stronger in regard to truth. Majority

or no majority, it has always seemed to me that a knowledge of the horrors of life is bad enough when it comes in such a way as not to be escaped, and I make my appeal to the old proverb that the proof of the pudding lies in the eating. Zola's warmest admirer will not pretend that society at large has been purified by his teaching. His "cruel cautery" has not succeeded.

In the very noble tribute to the memory of Balzac, whom he strove to emulate in the universality of his scheme, Zola wrote that if some wreck should happen in which only the "*Comédie Humaine*" would survive out of the relics of France, enough would be left to show that a great civilisation had once existed. Imagine such a convulsion and the sole survival of the "*Rougon-Macquart*" series! It, too, would serve as a proof that a civilisation had once seen the light, but the "*Bête Humaine*" would be beheld as its ruler, and, bad as we are, we were never so wholly evil as the author of the "*Bête Humaine*" has made us seem. But when we have concluded that his view of life was short-sighted and mistaken, and that its application to the form of art he chose was in itself an error, we may yet say good-bye to Émile Zola in the not unwarranted belief that, when his mistakes are buried and forgotten, his name may survive in a legend of courage and devotion.

## THE LESSER IMMORTALS.\*

THE little town of Cromarty, N.B., has been doing honour to itself by the erection of a memorial to its most distinguished native, the author of "The Old Red Sandstone" and "The Testimony of the Rocks." Bideford, in Devon, is following in the same path, and is about to erect a portrait statue to Charles Kingsley, to whom, if ever a local pride and love were a passport to the affections of his neighbours, some acknowledgement is fairly due. The two men whose characters and achievements are thus commemorated have a close likeness to each other in some respects and in others are wide asunder. Kingsley was not merely reviled as a Radical in days when Radicalism meant ostracism for a man of his class and calling. He was supposed to lend a sort of half-veiled aid to the physical force party, and to be in sympathy with the myrmidons of Captain Swing and with that subterranean army of pikemen who had never a chance to show a weapon in the field. As a matter of fact, as everybody now knows, the fiery Radical Parson was an aristocrat to the marrow, but he had the brains and the heart to understand the popular discontent which seethed in England in his time. Miller was a man of the people pure and simple. The son of a seaman who perished when Hugh was but five years of age, confided mainly to the guidance of his two maternal uncles, respectively saddler and carpenter, at school a truant and regarded as something of a dunce, later a stonemason's

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\* This was written in 1904.

apprentice, and for fifteen years a toiler in the quarry and the hewing shed. For all the difference of environment the two men come singularly near each other in places. The bases of character are very similar. For each of them the chief end of life is duty, and to each of them the chief joy of life is the contemplation of God in Nature. Kingsley is the more impetuous, the more outwardly urgent, the more diffuse in occupation and interest—a man full of generous and noble passions and hatreds ; Miller is placidly tenacious in purpose, fixed in a gentle calm, looking about him with a quiet clearness. Yet the gentle Scot and the perfervid Devonian are, as it were, cut out of the same piece, and each in his way is a representative of the worthiest kind of British manhood. Miller was largely instrumental in the establishment of the Free Church in Scotland. Kingsley's services to the Broad Church principle in England were hardly less great. Each was the advocate of intellectual freedom, and sworn foe to the domineering spirit of ecclesiasticism.

There are few pleasanter pictures to be found in the lives of British men of letters than that which the mind can conjure up of the truant days of Hugh Miller, when the boy, unconscious as yet of the forces which were at work within him, strayed from the humble seminary at Cromarty to find a mystic companionship on the hills and by the sea. The schoolmaster is sore afraid that his errant pupil will turn out a dunce. But Nature is calling to the lad's heart and he must away. On the western side of that brief and narrow firth on the shore of which he was born, the fierce Highland streams in the course of centuries have scooped out many veritable cañons in the conglomerate, and Miller's first studies in the Old Red Sandstone

may well have had their beginnings in those long, long days of interminable summer rambles. We know from his mother's record that the lad was "aye writin'," and on his biographer's testimony we know that he had something to write about, and that even in these early truant days he was developing a style already remarkable for coherence and continuity.

Naturally he wrote much verse, though he was never fated to be a poet. In his twenty-seventh year he published a small volume entitled, "Poems Written in the Leisure Hours of a Journeyman Mason," and the book was the end of his poetic ambitions. He saw himself in cold type, and he turned self-critic to such purpose that he resolved to confine himself thenceforth to prose. What a blessing would it be if this admirable self-knowledge were open to the Minor Poet as a genus! Much of the versified work was struck out to the accompaniment of the music of mallet on chisel and chisel on stone, and some of it in the least congenial of surroundings. He worked for two years at Niddrie, not far from Edinburgh, and in that excellent piece of biography which he calls "My Schools and Schoolmasters" he draws a scathing portrait of his associates—a swinish herd. His comrades made an impression upon him that never left him. You fancy the clean-souled young poet beating his music out amid their grossness of speech and their ignorant and lazy cackle about class interests, and you trace easily to its source his outburst in praise of "noble, upright, self-denying toil." "Who that knows thy solid worth and value," he exclaims, "would be ashamed of thy hard hands, and thy soiled vestments, and thy obscure tasks—thy humble cottage, and hard couch, and homely fare?" It is like the

voice of the son of the Ecclefechan carter. It is the very echo of Burns :

What though on homely fare we dine,  
Wear hoddern grey and a' that ?

In 1844 appeared the once famous “Vestiges of Creation.” The book achieved an extraordinary popularity for its time, and ran through ten editions in as many years. Without being absolutely original it had elements of originality, and it marked a distinct step in the long-running fight between the “creationists” and the “variationists.” So early as 1790 Herder had already given expression to the idea, afterwards amplified by Darwin, of the survival of the fittest. “All is in struggle, each one for himself. Each genus looks after itself as if it were the only one. In this way the whole was preserved. Thus were forces cradled, and limbs counted, and tendencies determined, and the earth came to bear what it could.” The author of the “Vestiges” formulated an hypothesis of progress by rhythmic impulse through grades of organisation, and by another impulse tending to modify organic structures in accordance with external circumstances. To all this Miller opposed himself strongly. In his address to the Royal Physical Society of Edinburgh in 1852, he asserted the existence of a distinct line of demarcation between the Tertiary, the Secondary, and the Palæozoic strata. He could find no signs of the continuity of animal life whatsoever. He admitted that the Bible does not teach science, but he clung to the old six days’ version of creation, and he did so on scientific grounds as far as they were open to his view.

It was not until three years after Miller’s death that the monumental theories of Darwin and Wallace began to revolutionise the beliefs which had hitherto

been held by geologists and biologists alike. Huxley, in his defence of the Agnostic attitude he had held until the publication of the "Origin of Species," points out that up to that date "the evidence in favour of Transmutation was wholly insufficient," and that no suggestion made had, so far, been adequate to explain the phenomena. Miller, patient and enlightened, broad-minded and honest as he was, could not be expected to run in advance of the knowledge of his time. He was in the vanguard in his day, and it may be pretty safely said that the man who is in the vanguard of his own time would have been in the vanguard of any time in which it might have been his fortune to have been born. We cannot estimate Miller's knowledge or his judgment by that of the twentieth century. It is enough that he was master of his craft so far as it was possible to master it. He has many claims to the memory of his countrymen. A right square-hewn piece of Scottish manhood, with wit and skill to emerge from poor and obscure surroundings into a position of honoured eminence, and, just for once in a way, a man of science with a written style as completely beautiful and fitting as that of any Briton who ever yet put pen to paper. No man will read him now after a lapse of nearly half a century for the latest conclusions of Science, but he has set out one chapter in her history in terms which deserve to be immortal.

Charles Kingsley, who survived Miller by nineteen years, is another of our worthies, and we do well to commemorate him also, though it is possible enough that future generations will be in the main content to take his reputation upon trust. The passionate Socialism of "Alton Locke" and "Yeast" may survive in spirit here and there, and is, indeed, certain to

survive wherever men keenly discern injustice and cruelty in social inequalities, but we are not likely to see any renewal of the form of it in England. Society is making a rod for its own back nowadays of quite another sort to that with which it cut so heavily into the hide of the proletariat sixty years ago. Our slaves of that time are in certain very weighty respects our masters of to-day. The problem as stated by Kingsley is quite out of date, and his polemical novels can have no more than an historic and literary interest for any reader of to-day. There is some work from his hand which the world is not likely to let die whilst the English language endures. For many and many a generation to come, to say the least of it, no anthology of English song will be held complete without the story of the Three Fishers who went sailing out into the West. This is altogether a piece of genius-work, and with it Charles Kingsley touched his high-water mark. I have just been repeating it to myself, and there is not only not a word or a syllable that one could wish away or altered, but it seems the very perfection of utterance, and as true in its sad philosophy as it is poignant in its pathos and beautiful in its form. If Kingsley carried no more than this one royal jewel in his hand, it would serve as his passport to the realms of our immortals.

But he carried much more—nothing else quite so perfect, but much of high value. His novels are all tracts of greater or smaller dimensions. It may be said of him, indeed, that he scarcely indited a page which was not either a tract or a sermon. He was for ever in the act of denunciation or of exhortation. “*Westward Ho!*” is one great preaching against the wickedness of the Spaniard and the Jesuit in the days of Queen Elizabeth. In his view England was

the scourge of God in those days, especially chosen and appointed to deal justice against "the devildoms of Spain." It is hard, it is often impossible, to read in cold blood the authentic history of the Spanish dealings with the mild civilisations of the New World. But Kingsley boils and rages, not as if he were looking at the image of an age long dead and vanished, but as if he had an inspired mission to exterminate some living evil thing which, but for his knight-errantry, would devour the world. There is no such other outburst of Jingoism in the language—nothing so prolonged, so ecstatic: there is no similar indictment of an enemy in any literature with which I am acquainted.

It remains a singularly wholesome and inspiring book for an English lad to read, but its student will stand in need of many and serious corrections. Kingsley is just as certain that the hapless Queen of Scots was an astute female fiend whose pitiable death was the only possible solution for the religious problem in England, as he was that all Jesuits and Spaniards were the spawn of hell, or as he was that Elizabeth was an angel of light and a lamp of guidance to her people. In poor Mary's case, the fact that she was bred under the influence of Catherine de' Medici is allowed all the importance it deserves. Readers of Brantôme know the record of the debaucheries and murders which gave a brutal zest to the life of that most infamous woman's brilliant Court. But Elizabeth's angel-hood is not even faintly smirched by the fact that Henry was her father, that she had the blood of "the Royal tiger" in her veins, and was bred in an atmosphere almost as sanguinary as that of her hapless Royal cousin. Kingsley's history, in short, is written in a Jingo vertigo.

One has to own that Elizabeth's courtiers were either as valiant in falsehood as they were in fight, or that they had a genuine belief in the virtue of their Queen, but the impartial student feels that he is compelled to revise their opinions. Old Fairfax, dedicating his translation of Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered" to her Most Sacred Majesty, writes thus :

Her hand, her foot, her vesture's hem,  
Muse, touch not, for polluting them.  
All that is hers is clear, pure, holy.  
Beneath her footstool humbly lie  
That she may bless thee with her eye—  
The sun shines not on good things solely.

Charles Kingsley was perhaps the latest Englishman with any pretence to reading who would have been found to echo this fulsome nonsense. But as an historian Kingsley is very much in the posture of a man who should strive to paint a picture with a sledge-hammer.

## LONGFELLOW'S FIRST CENTENARY.

I suppose that when a man is nearing the close of his sixtieth year he may regard himself as having reached the outer confines of middle-age, yet I testify of my own experience, that such a one may very often be surprised to find himself confronted with some fact which proves to him that he is young no longer. Such a surprise befell me two or three weeks ago, as I was casually turning over the pages of a Dictionary of Biography, and, lighting upon the name of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, discovered that on the twenty-

seventh day of February, 1907, a century had passed away since the poet first saw the light in the quaint old town of Portland. A hundred years! And he and I were co-temporaries so long, and I saw so much of the increase of his fame, that I had grown to think of him—or, perhaps, rather, to feel concerning him—as if he were a man of my own epoch. As a mere matter of fact, he was well on the way to fifty when I made my earliest excursion into his pages and first saw his pictured face. The book was a thin, flat 12mo bound in shagreen cloth—"Voices of the Night." It was a memorable *trouvaille* for a child of seven who was born to find the deepest and most abiding joy of his whole life in the felicitously spoken word, and to this hour the verses read in the sunshiny, shabby, old, neglected back-garden have a power to move my heart which is denied to many poems of profounder feeling and finer craftsmanship. Years three-and-fifty seem abolished as I recall that morning, and I should know the clean-shaven student face of the steel engraving which faced the vignetted title-page if I met it in the street to-day.

Ever since I have been able to separate myself from the glamour of an early enchantment I have thought that Longfellow's chief claim to the affection of the world lies in the fact that he was so essentially a gentleman. It is entirely true of him that—in the words of Tennyson's limited appreciation of his own laurelled forerunner—he "uttered nothing base." And if he were not a great poet he was a very true exponent of the homelier emotions, and he had a certain simple music of his own which is as beautifully adapted to the simplicity of his thought as the tune of an old ballad is fitted to the words to which it had been married for many generations. Now and again he

claims a loftier lineage than that of the gentle fireside singer

—Some simple poet,  
Whose songs gushed from his heart  
As rain from the clouds in summer  
Or tears from the eyelids start.

In one of the Poems on Slavery there is an outburst of prophetic splendour. Everybody will recall the verse beginning "There is a poor, blind Samson in this land." The doom foretold but narrowly escaped fulfilment, and though "the vast temple" still stands firm after the "grim revel" of the War of Secession its survival was long in doubt. Had Longfellow written oftener in this strain or in the manner of "The Arsenal at Springfield" he would have won another title to our admiration, though not one more enduring, and perhaps he would have sacrificed something of our affection. Here and there he flashes out the royal hand and speaks in the true regal tone :

When descend on the Atlantic  
The gigantic  
Scourges of the Equinox.

But he is rarely moved to these moods, and the beautiful voice is rarely strenuous.

It is always manly, and often enough robust; but the prevailing memory one has of him is one of a mellowed gentleness and goodness. He is a cultured, scholarly, refined, and right-hearted gentleman whom one would rather describe as a sentimentalist than as a poet, if the word had not wilted so mournfully away from the meaning Sterne attached it to when he gave its title to "A Sentimental Journey." It has fallen on evil times, and the world is verbally in tune with Sir Anthony Absolute, though it damns only the mawkishness and insincerity which never had so much

as a peep over the garden-wall of Longfellow's virile tenderness. A gentleman. A gentle man. Gently bred, gently nurtured, gently schooled, in the fine old meaning of a fine old word. And, when all is said and done, the world reserves its *love* for the writer who has the power to lure it to the true sentimental mood.

A tender and delicate longing,  
Which is not akin to pain,  
And resembles sorrow only  
As the mist resembles rain.

It may worship the man who, like Browning, compels it to bruise its brain against thought "too rugged to companion pulp so tender and unused," or who, like Tennyson, makes the obscure seem easy by the sheer magic of his crystal style; it may reverence the noble austeries of Milton; or the myriad-faceted genius of Shakespeare; but it is open to doubt whether there is a poet of them all who is more deeply rooted in the affections of his readers than Longfellow. And to have achieved this is to attain to a greatness of its kind. There are heights to which he never soared, and there are deeps he never sounded, but those heights and deeps are out of the reach of all but one mind in a thousand, and Longfellow's especial good fortune is that he moves liberally in the temperate zone of thought and emotion, and is therefore never out of reach of anybody.

In Leigh Hunt's beautiful and unjustly-neglected "Legend of Rimini" there is a line in the opening description of a landscape which runs thus: "And there's a crystal clearness all about." If I were editing an edition of Longfellow I should be tempted to take that as a motto for the title-page. It is not alone that there is no twilight in the poet's thought

or in his style. It is not alone that every reader with a child's intelligence can seize immediately on the meaning of any and every thought he expressed. The crystal clearness is literally "all about" because it was the pre-eminent characteristic of the writer's soul. There is only one unclouded medium through which it is possible for one human soul to look upon another; and the thinker, and, more particularly, the thinker who is a poet, creates his medium for himself. The medium is that of an unadulterated good-will, and most especially in the case of Longfellow it is a good-will towards Innocence. Priscilla and Evangeline will probably live as long as Imogen and Desdemona, not because they betray the rare and searching touches of a genius almost immeasurably greater than Longfellow's, but because their creator was a gentleman, and laid such a hand on the pure heart as only the pure can command. The most sluggish memory will only need to be reminded of "Standing with reluctant feet" and the line "Thy dress was like the lilies" to understand exactly what I am driving at. There's a crystal clearness all about. It's the crystal clearness of a good man's heart.

The style is the man. St. Paul bade his elect be known by their walk and conversation, meaning no more their gait and talk than "style" here means verbal management. The Art-for-Art's-sake gentry would have you think that the nice conduct of a clouded phrase is of the very essence of style, but, with Longfellow at least, it is Heart for Heart's sake, and the result is that without being a great poet, or anything like a great poet, he takes something very like a great poet's place in the minds of those whose intellectual lot is cast in the middle parts of fortune. I have long arrived at the belief that character is the

biggest counter with which a man can play for lasting fame, and that if a writer has a soul obscene or mean or pretentious or insincere, the moral blemish will wean the public affection in the long run as surely as if it were bitter aloes on the dugs of a nurse. That is the reason for which, on the edge of Longfellow's first centenary, I make bold to bespeak for him an enduring fame. The crystal clearness is all about him. His very presence on your shelves is a rebuke to lewd or irreverent thinking, and that is an effect which no art or artifice in the world can produce. It is a pure emanation of the writer's nature—the unconscious revelation of the heart. One of the most striking examples of this principle to be found in English literature may be seen in the pages of Thackeray. There are many thousands of lines in the works of that great writer which are far out-rivalled by authors of a lower range of genius, but when you have done with a book of his you feel that you have been in companionship with an unusually wise, tolerant, and affectionate nature, a very brave, clear-sighted, good man. And this also is the praise of Longfellow.

Since Gray, whose "*Elegy*" is one series of immortal commonplaces, so moulded as to afford ready expression to the universal thought, and who spent years on years in perfecting the saying of that which many men had said before him, there has been no more assiduous polisher than Tennyson, but even he—the best artificer who ever worked in English verse—has confessed that "to add and alter many times" may be to make the fruit of labour not only ripe but rotten. It is nature which speaks best, and a genuine sincerity will always find its phrase. From the point of view of the more literary craftsman there are few

of the accepted poets of the world who are more faulty than Longfellow, but his sincerity saves him from shipwreck even on the preposterous images of the "Psalm of Life," which, in spite of all defect, is, and will be, one of the most popular poems in the language. Only an almost incredible carelessness could have allowed that verse to stand which follows the famous line about "footprints on the sands of time":

Footprints that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er Life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.

How a man might be forlorn and shipwrecked and sailing o'er life's solemn main at the same time is a bit of a puzzle, and why he should take heart under these impossible conditions at the sight of footprints is another, but the world has not stumbled at the poet's meaning, which is clear and strong enough in spite of the confusion of his metaphors.

This would be a poor and unworthy game indeed if my meaning were to depreciate a writer whose work has given delight to millions, and will continue to do so long and long after the critic's pen is turned to rust and the critic's name is forgotten. But to reveal a defect in the workmanship of an acknowledged master is one way of emphasising the excellences which keep him alive in its despite. There are few poems which linger in the mind with a more tender sweetness than that beginning "The day is done":

The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of Night.

I remember the first reading of these lines, and the vision they brought of some vast overshadowing angel whose passing shed a blessing of restful gloom upon

the world, and I remember also the utter sense of trivial inadequacy in the lines that follow, and follow only because "it's easy to find a rhyme" as Tennyson says in the verses he wrote to Sullivan to set to music.

As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

Here is a swift death for the vast overshadowing angel. The second trope is pretty enough by itself, but it is fatal to the first, which is incomparably finer, and it is the want of revision which is here so strongly indicated which is in part answerable for Longfellow's exclusion from the rank to which he might have aspired. An exquisite improviser, but lacking in the patience which goes to the making of the finished artist. A triumph of character over the faults of method.

## HAWTHORNE'S CENTENARY.

WE have just (July, 1904) passed the hundredth anniversary of the birthday of Nathaniel Hawthorne. It passed with little recognition in this country, and in the United States the memory of the great novelist was somewhat obscured by the fact that the Fourth of July is Independence Day. The lesser light is inevitably absorbed in the greater. The birth of a nation is of more importance than the birth of a man of letters, and whilst people are in the act of celebrating the one, they are apt to lose sight of the other. Yet Hawthorne is a national possession of no mean value, and America has a quite adequate conception of his worth and of the place he occupies in the realm of

literature. Edgar Allan Poe apart, he is the most individual and characteristic of American literary men. He has lived to see a third generation of readers, and his place may be looked on as secure. But the arrival of his centenary seems mainly interesting to me, because it affords so vivid an illustration of the youth of American literature. There are hundreds of things which are perfectly well known to us which we forget until some reminder brings us up suddenly with a round turn and compels our renewed attention. It was not until after 1830 that the United States began to cultivate its own garden of letters in anything like earnest. Fenimore Cooper, to be sure, had published his first novel in 1819, an anonymous work called "Precautions," which I do not remember to have met with in any collected edition of his works. He followed it two years later by "The Spy," a book known to all readers of fiction, but it was not until he was well into the eighteen-forties that he got into his own stride and gave to the world the novels which earned for him the enthusiastic approval of Balzac and led Victor Hugo to pronounce the wild and random judgment in which he compared Cooper with Sir Walter Scott to the disparagement of the latter.

Washington Irving was even a few years earlier, for "Knickerbocker's History of New York" appeared in 1809, and "Geoffrey Crayon's Sketch Book" was published in London by Murray in 1820. But not even two swallows make a summer, and Cooper and Irving, charming and welcome as they were, and are, could of themselves give no more than a promise of the harvest to be looked for. Fitz Greene Halleck and Rodman Drake are little more than names for the ordinary reader nowadays, though they

contributed their quota to the dawn of letters in their own country, yet it was not until Holmes, Poe, Emerson, Prescott, Bancroft, Whittier, and Longfellow all flamed up together about seventy years ago that America had more than the beginnings of a literature. Until then she had been too busy in the establishment of her own independence and in the fierce wrestle with nature to look much after the mere ornaments of life. There was a sparse population scattered over a huge country. Education was barely attainable in many places. There was no audience for a great thinker or a great poet, and the great thinkers and great poets always come when the time is ripe for them and not earlier. The sudden incursion of the men just mentioned, whose names still shine in the American firmament, is one of the simplest and most explicable phenomena in history. They grew as simply and inevitably as a rose upon a rose-tree, and one can trace the genesis and the process of growth in each one of them.

But to return to Hawthorne. It was he who gave the first proof of an American genius equal at once in refinement and in force to all but the very highest of our own literature. "*The Scarlet Letter*" is in every respect a very remarkable piece of work. The author's style had already earned the praise of his old college comrade Longfellow. "Pellucid as running water" was one of the encomiastic phrases. It was well deserved, but style in literature is not a thing which of itself can enlist the popular reader. Hawthorne's real charm and his real claim to rank lie in the wonderful sympathetic understanding he had of the old Puritan spirit, and the influence it exerted upon the temperament of those who came, whether willingly or unwillingly, beneath its rule.

He resembled Scott inasmuch as he found in the familiar annals of his own childhood and youth much of the material which was of greatest use to him in the days of working maturity. His grandfather was a staunch prosecutor of Quakers and witches, apparently holding both in equal abhorrence, and some of the chief incidents of "The House of the Seven Gables" are no more than a free translation from family history.

Longfellow has tried his hand on the theme to which his friend owes his best fame, but his "New England Tragedies" leave us altogether unmoved and cold. They give us the dry bones only, and the poet had no art to make them live and to clothe them with the living and palpitating flesh of humanity. Now Hawthorne has a genuine historical value, because he helps us to understand, as all true history does, the processes which act in the formation of the character of a people. The Puritan Fathers, who learned their own severities in a rough school, and who bettered their instruction when their own time of freedom came, had many lofty qualities. Hard, ignorant, prejudiced, and superstitious as they were, they were inspired by an almost superhuman courage and endurance, and they worshipped the God of their own hard ignorance, prejudice, and superstition with their whole heart and soul and strength. Better founders for a new people in a new and savage land there could not well have been. Their influence is mainly active now because their tenets prompted to rebellion. Modern America is largely a reaction from the Puritan theory of life, but it could not even remotely have resembled its existing self without the early Puritan modes of life and thought.

It is Hawthorne's main achievement to have be-

queathed to us a living understanding of the founders of American liberty, and he affords us one more example of the singular fact in literature that we owe our impressions of society as it existed in bygone years less to contemporary writers than to those fortunate students whose imagination has enabled them to conceive and body forth the inhabitants of the past. We know the Rome of the days of Julius Cæsar more intimately from Shakespeare's page than from any contemporary chronicler. The first great Churchill lives in the chronicles of "*Esmond*" as he lives nowhere else—the truest and most moving picture of Mediæval Europe is to be found in "*The Cloister and the Hearth*"—no historian of the Crusades has rivalled Scott, and certainly no writer contemporary with their events has given us so vital an understanding of the epoch as we owe to the greatest of romancers. Nobody, of course, will pretend that Shakespeare, Thackeray, Reade, and Scott are more accurate than the historians upon whose work they founded their own labours, so far as the record of dry fact is concerned, but they have something infinitely better than mere accuracy of detail. They present live men and women to our gaze—we feel that we are in contact with flesh and blood. To leave the pages of the historian for those of the really great masters in historic fiction is something like leaving Madame Tussaud's exhibition for the theatre at its best. It is to change from the dead effigy to life itself. It is only the masters who can so revive an age as to make its people more than puppets to our fancy. It is sometimes urged that the historic form of fiction is the highest. It is assuredly the most difficult, and to achieve complete success in its pursuit implies the possession of many faculties which are not necessary

to the finest portraiture of contemporary manners. It may not, perhaps, be said that Hawthorne is the only American novelist who is likely to secure what we humans call immortality, but he is more firmly fixed in his place than any other writer of fiction his land has so far given to the world.

## RUDYARD KIPLING.

IN choosing Mr. Rudyard Kipling to represent Literature at the annual banquet of the Royal Academy, the Invitation Committee bestowed a somewhat tardy honour upon a man who has long since taken rank. As always happens with a writer whose characteristics are mainly his own, there have been plenty of people to dispute Mr. Kipling's right to the place which has been assigned to him by popular consent. There was never a writer yet who did not give to the world something with which it would be ready to dispense, and it is easy enough to point out things of Mr. Kipling's which do not represent him at his best. But it is the happy lot of the artist to be remembered by his achievements and not by his failures. Of the painter, the poet, the writer of fiction, it is not to be said that the evil that they do lives after them, and that the good is oft interred with their bones. A statesman may obscure his most brilliant achievement by a single error. A Napoleon may leave behind him a record in which his Moscow and his Waterloo take a greater hold upon the imagination than his most brilliant victories. But a man of letters can be remembered—when he is remembered at all—only by his best. Time, in very disdain of the author's rubbish

heap, sorts out his excellences with an unerring hand ; his truest friend in being the most merciless destroyer of whatever he has done unworthily.

When we strive to estimate the probable future standing of a living writer we may well begin by asking ourselves if he has done *anything* which the world will insist on conserving when the charm of his newness or his singularity has passed away. There are reputations which bloom like flowers and fade almost as quickly. They are lovely and pleasant in their time, but the world, even whilst it takes joy in them, knows that in a little while they will have no more value than a last week's nosegay unless, in some special case—alike with one and with the other—an association lend a value to the faded blossom, to you or to me, which it can have for no other person, a charm to the song which is not its own but ours. A considerable number of the favourite writers of every age fail to survive the test. Time carries so huge a wallet at his back already, and adds to its contents at such a rate, that he is forced to throw away by handfuls that he may conserve only a leaflet here and there. Some, even of the selected leaflets, he must needs abandon in a generation or two. Some linger in mere fragments, torn and worn into shreds. There are many things which are consigned to the rag-bag of the memory which one knows to be worthy of a better place. They have their unconsciously bestowed survival. It seems probable that nothing really worth remembering has been forgotten, after having been once expressed. Its immortal part—its Identical—that which constitutes its truth and worth—is worked into the warp and woof of new expression after new expression, until the happy man comes along who uses it so deftly and so well that it can never be put to

better purpose, and it takes its place with a form as permanent as its soul.

When a man has done that by an idea, if he has only done it once, and in a couplet or a phrase of prose, he has earned what we call immortality. That his name will not be remembered in association with it is a question of no account. The essential riches of a language are anonymous. Nobody knows, or cares to know, the names of the makers of a thousand household phrases, though the man who moulded each into its final shape has done one immortal thing. To make the name equally memorable—or to bring it even into comparative memorableness—he must have done something rounded and complete in itself. You may exercise yourself—not without profit—by asking with a candid mind what works of art there are in the world which you yourself could not dispense with except at a serious loss. You will probably be surprised, at the end of your inquiry, by the extreme smallness of your library. But minds are so various that a general self-examination of this sort would spare to the reader pretty nearly all he cares for even in a moderate degree. Looking at the work which has been done in my own time by writers younger than myself I find three men—and, so far, three only—from whose work I could not tear myself—whose labours I could not have eliminated—without serious personal loss. Blank tells a charming story, or writes an agreeable essay, or has a more than tolerable turn for verse, but it would not wound me if I saw no more from his hand. What he gives me I know I shall take pleasure in, but I should not be hit painfully if he chose to go silent. But there are three of my juniors of whom I can say that they have worked themselves into the texture of my emotions. To lose memory

of them and to be conscious of the loss would be a grievous thing.

Kipling is one of these, and to my thinking he is one of the elected living who are already assured of two or three hundred years. For some such space of time I cannot imagine a worthy anthology of English verse which should not include the "Recessional." Personally I go a great deal further in my faith, but I put this down for a certainty. And when one thinks thus of a craftsman, one can hardly fail to listen respectfully to what he has to say—on an occasion which must be of more than ordinary moment and interest to himself—about the scope and object of his art. Mr. Kipling is now coming to be one of the men of riper years, and it would be an affectation to speak of him as if he were still a young phenomenon ; but for all that, I had done the best work I have ever done, or ever shall do, long before the "Man from Nowhere" flamed amazement on us all, and made the venerable farthing rushlights of a good many of us pale—very pale—by contrast with the fire of "The Drums of the Fore and Aft" and the triumphant sunlight fun of "My Lord the Elephant." The brilliant, splendid youngster walked in and took his own without even seeming to claim it—with the fine modesty which so often goes along with power, and since Boz at six or seven-and-twenty was currently known as "The Inimitable," there has not been so confident or so sustained an apparition in the literature of Great Britain. I said at his coming what old Haydn said of Handel : "This man is the master of us all ;" and in respect to those qualities which made him what he was, and which make him now integrally a part of the literature of our country, I am not going back upon myself by a word or a syllable.

And for all that and all that I have a crow to pluck with Mr. Kipling. And here is my complaint against him. He stands up in the presence of many distinguished workers in a sister craft, and in the presence of many of those who are taking part in the work of the world in other ways, all equally worthy, and he says of literature that it is the chronicler of its tribe, and that it is its mission to take down to posterity the truest, the most intensely veracious, the innermost vision of the tribe. Now, Mr. Kipling is one of those who not only take their work seriously, but are taken seriously by it, which is a greater matter and of more importance. And in spite of that we find him repeating in effect the poor proclamation of the late Sir Edwin Arnold at the dinner given some years ago to Literature and the Sister Arts by one of our Lord Mayors—"We sell immortalities." Mr. Kipling does not really take this belittling view of the great craft he follows, nor, I am sure, did the author of "The Light of Asia." But, desiring to speak modestly in their own persons—which is an excellent thing in all men—they cast a slur upon that great profession of which they themselves are ornaments. Literature is something so very much greater than any of its professors that the modestest man alive, who wields a pen in its service, can dare to speak impersonally of its splendour.

Any timber-toed old relic of the wars who smokes his pipe on the workhouse bench has a right to say, "We who have been soldiers," and the writing man to whom his craft is dear makes no profession on his own behalf, offers no boast for which he can be made to blush, when he claims that the craft to which he belongs has a thing to do—and does it—which is a thousandfold more valuable to the world than the

most complete and perfect record of fact accomplished ever was or ever will be. The writers of the world are not the chroniclers of history only. They are the makers of it. The only history worth troubling about is the history of the moulding and expansion of the human soul and the lifting and widening of the human destiny. The men who make that history, the men who make nations, are the world's thinkers. Mr. Kipling is himself at this moment, has for some years past been, and for some generations to come must continue to be, one of those potent influences which go to the making of men. To say that his influence is not wholly benevolent is one way of admitting that he is a living thing and not a dummy. But he is a force, and a real force ; as yet of not estimable magnitude, to be sure, but a force all the same, potential in the making of this England. And whatever Mr. Kipling may think, he is not doing his real work merely in telling the truth as he sees it about his "tribe." He is doing that work in helping to *make* his tribe, which is almost immeasurably a greater thing.

Mr. Kipling said in the course of his speech, and said quite rightly, that human life is a cheapish sort of a product. So it is in the individual, but in the aggregate it is precious beyond speech, and the man who really helps to direct it is doing the only work worth doing in this world. He is one of those who are building better than they know. His type of manhood and of duty is not to every man's ideal. But what of that ? It is a good type : robust, courageous, honest, coarse, limited, but sincere, loving, and doing duty, and holding duty a divine and a sacred thing. That is the type he sees best and is most in sympathy with amongst his tribe, and in seeing it he helps to

create it. It must be an appallingly poor nature which would be the worse for his ideal. It would be a most uncommonly good one which would not be enriched by its absorption. The real man of letters, poet, writer of fiction or of drama, of philosophy or history or science, is doing more than chronicle his age. Thought is the one force in the world. Thought when it inspires and is conveyed with the right word is deathless, and deathlessly assured of triumph everywhere.

Let us leave it to the Players to be, as Hamlet describes them, the abstract and brief chroniclers of their time ; but let us make a wider claim for literature, and a higher. There are plenty who earn their bread by it, and who feign to undervalue it, and what they say or what they think matters nothing except for the moment. For they are not the men who last. And there are plenty of others who do it yeoman's service all their lives, who, like Ruskin and Carlyle, have jaundiced moments in which they think it is a poor thing. But, truly seen, it is the best of life. And it is the one infallible index to a nation, as, indeed, by its very nature it cannot fail to be.

Mr. Kipling cites the muzzy Scotsman, the shop-keeping pamphleteer, the gaoled tinker, the German Jew, the French thief—meaning, as I take him, Burns, Defoe, Bunyan, Heine, Villon—as having been successful searchers after the essential Word. Why, since they found it, should not he, should not anybody, who cares to crucify his own soul in pursuit of that great emprise, find it also ? To which I answer, with all respect, but in all earnestness, that Mr. Kipling is taking hold of an idea by the wrong handle. It is not because these men have sought the Word that they move us, that they burn within us, that they

walk about in our soul-spaces, turning dreams to a passion of action, or, at their poorest effect, to an aching of desire. Not one bit of it. There are hundreds of us who seek the Word, and go on seeking, and who do not find it. There always have been seekers by the crowd, but the only triumphant seeking is that which is done by the Word Itself, the Logos, the wind of the Spirit which blows where it lists, which finds its muzzy Scotsman, or its German Jew, or its French thief, and breathes into him the music which haunts us with beauty, and passion, and scorn, and deep regrets, and longings, and pains, and pleasures which we find inexpressible except in the inspired tones which have been drawn from him. Mr. Kipling is himself one of those whom the Word has found, and it needs not to be said that whilst It has found him, he has been in search of It. The man who meets the inspiring spirit must be in quest of it, but it is not this quest which brings about the meeting. "Many are called, but few are chosen." Many are called to the quest of the true Word, but few are chosen to be its finders.

It is just possible that the seeker who has not succeeded in his quest may discern this truth more clearly than he who has. The literary spirit can never express itself through an instrument which is not thrilled by its coming, but the instrument most certainly does not need to be thrilled in its every fibre. There are many of "The Voiceless," as Oliver Wendell Holmes calls them, who seek more genuinely after expression and who are keener to breathe the true music than some of those into whom the music has been blown. But Literature, when all is said and done, remains the greatest thing we know, and the biggest genius we conceive ladles only a few bucketsful from its ocean.

Veritably “Life is but Thought”; and Literature, embodying, as it does, the human soul, moulding it and revealing it, expressing it and inspiring it, remains eternally the one thing imperishable amongst all the possessions of man.

### HERBERT SPENCER.

AT last—after many years of growing constitutional feebleness—the greatest English thinker of the last half of the nineteenth century has passed from among us, leaving a blameless record and a great fame behind him. Yet we may take some comfort from the reflection that Herbert Spencer is still as much with us in the vital sense as he was when he was still living. One may cite once more in regard to him the noble words in which Charles Reade re-embalmed the memory of Great Erasmus. Thoughts like his are not born to die. They may seem for awhile to sleep in the dust of great libraries, but with every fresh shower of intelligence which falls upon the human mind they revive, they prove their immortal race. “They bud, they flower, they fruit, they seed, from generation to generation, and from age to age.” One of the great minds which we unconsciously class with Ptolemy, with Bacon, with Newton, with Goethe, and Darwin has ceased to work amongst us. Spencer was one of those whom the late great Poet Laureate might have ranked with “Plato the wise and large-browed Verulam—the first of those that know.” And thinking of him and of the work he left behind with that sense of solemnity which must always be a part of the legacy of death, I am rather inclined to be ashamed of the sneer in which I have

lately once or twice indulged at the expense of "the alert American intelligence." I might at least have recorded my knowledge of the fact that amidst all their intellectual vagaries the great American people appreciated Spencer's worth long before his own countrymen rose to any adequate perception of it, precisely as they did in the case of Carlyle almost a generation earlier.

Herbert Spencer's death was expected long before it actually happened, and most newspapers of weight and character throughout the world had his obituary notice pigeon-holed in readiness for publication in the event of his decease. It may be reckoned, therefore, that his life's work has been reviewed at leisure, and out of the multitude of criticisms it may be supposed that a fair estimate of the man may be extracted. But in one respect at least his critics appear to unite in one formidable misapprehension as to the fundamental characteristics of his mind. It is, of course, quite true that his written style was what is called "pedestrian," and that he cared little to ornament the surface expression of his thought by those graces with which some great thinkers have succeeded in alluring their readers through tracts of speculation and reason which might otherwise have seemed arid and dreary. "Mr. Spencer's mind," we are told, "was weighty and far-reaching, serious and earnest. It lacked subtlety, imagination, and poetry. . . . His sense of humour, too, was but slight." The earlier part of this diagnosis is, to my mind, wholly mistaken. It seems to me impossible to conceive that the great scheme of thought he evolved could ever have been revealed to the mind of a man who was not essentially gifted with an imagination of the highest order. In the production of his work the

imaginative faculty was held in strictest subordination, but one supreme act of imagination must have initiated the whole. It is surely a critical error to ignore the intellectual foundation on which the whole superstructure was erected. Imagination—that is, the power to body forth a something not yet in existence—is at the root of all invention, whether in mechanics or in speculation.

There is a sense in which the New Republic or the *Novum Organum* is as truly imaginative as the tragedies of Euripides or Shakespeare. They do not display the element of fancy, which is often confused with the larger gift, but they have their origin in the imagination. Every great original thinker, howsoever prosaic his expression may be, is at root a poet—a maker—a dreamer of dreams at his beginning. To whom, Spencer asks in one of his essays, will a piece of Alpine scenery more powerfully appeal ; “ to an ignorant mind, or to the mind of a philosopher who knows that over that mountain a glacier slid a million years ago ? ” And in respect to the further charge of being deficient in humour, there are some who will think that the philosopher’s statement to the Royal Commissioners has at least a tinge of the faculty. “ I think it probable,” he said, in speaking of the public reception of his own work, “ that if you were to ask ninety-nine people out of a hundred whether they would rather take a spoonful of cod-liver oil or read a chapter of ‘ Principles of Psychology,’ they would prefer the oil.”

## **MISCELLANEOUS**



## ANARCHY AND ITS MAKERS.\*

WHETHER we like to think so or not, it is pretty evident that we have crossed the threshold of a new epoch in the history of civilisation. It has always been a hard task rightly to estimate the current of contemporary events, and it must for ever continue to be difficult. To the gaze of the student of history the happenings of a given period group themselves in such a way that their sequence, and not their sequence only, but their active relationship to each other, can be more or less clearly discerned. The historian is in the position of a man who has gained a hill-top and commands a general view of a landscape. The contemporary observer is like a traveller in a forest to whom each forward movement is full of interest and revelation, but whose conceptions of the country through which he passes are, as it were, from hand to mouth. They may, in the main, be accurate, but an unexpected valley or mountain may at any time change the trend of his advance and falsify all prophecy. It will certainly be interesting, and it may even be useful, to attempt for a moment and in one respect alone to anticipate the historic view of this present epoch.

It is certain that the period in which we live will be

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\* This was written in 1902, so that the assassinations of the King of Servia in 1903 and of the King of Portugal in the present year are necessarily not mentioned.

remarkable for many reasons to the observer of the future. For one reason in especial it cannot fail to be so. We are far enough removed from the Great French Revolution to understand something of its causes. We see a dreadful contrast of luxury and squalor. We see a governing class incapable of the arts of government; selfish, inordinately extravagant, and removed to an almost incredible distance from human sympathy. We are familiar with the results which sprang from these causes, and we are apt to philosophise about them calmly, and with a feeling of easy detachment, as if nothing of a like kind were ever again to happen or were so much as possible in our own time. As a mere matter of fact, it is true not only that the like causes are at work amongst us, but that the like effects are even now in action. The world is in travail with a new ideal, which may prove monstrous or divine, but the signs and portents which forerun its birth are already strangely momentous.

It is no new thing that rulers should be assassinated, but there is no period in history in which the practice of regicide—the word is not literally accurate, but it will serve—has been so common as it has been within the living memory of men who have barely reached the full flush of manhood. Leaving out the records of rulers of trivial influence, of barbaric power, men of early middle-age recall seven such events. They remember Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, Carnot, King Humbert, the Empress of Austria, the last Czar but one. They recall, further, a number of abortive attempts in the same direction, and many murders of high administrative officials. From this point of view alone our epoch will present a purple patch, indeed, to the eye of the historic student. We live

in an era of startling assassinations—an era without comparison. It is only when we group these events together that we begin to arrive at an idea of the complexion we shall present to future ages.

What is the meaning of it all? It is everywhere the tiger in oppressed humanity stretching the old blood-stained claw to pull the oppressor down. One needs by no means be entirely on the side of the tiger to say so. One can see that the beast-ferocity adds wrong to wrong, that it kills the virtuous, the worthy, the helpful, or the harmless at the least. One can see the futility, the cruelty, the madness of its rage, but there is no mistaking the reason for it. See what has happened, and is happening in civilised lands. I have seen whole regiments under arms at bivouac in the streets of Brooklyn to suppress a labour strike, and thirty thousand troops of all arms in Paris to overawe a popular demonstration. Within the last few days there has been civic murder in the streets of Ghent. There has been blood in the streets of Madrid. In Santander there was a bloodstained frolic of riot around a flaming railway station. In Helsingfors and Abo, and throughout Finland, the populace is at war with the police. There are riots in Austria. At St. Petersburg and elsewhere through Russia the knout and the gallows are working triple tides. In Italy the pot of the popular patience is constantly boiling over. It is the same in France, where only the other day a whole army corps was turned into a disturbed labour district. Even in Germany Socialism counts its million for any ten thousand it could claim half a score years ago, and the Socialism is increasingly inclined to become militant. The era is not merely one which bears the bloody stigma of murder as no era ever before. It is one of widespread civic war,

and the war, like the list of murders, is without a historic parallel.

The picture is highly coloured, but the tints are not those of fancy. They are laid on by the hand of fact, and their most vivid tones are to be seen in blots and splotches almost everywhere. Here in this quiet island nest of ours we take it all very calmly, but in the sister island there are nine proclaimed counties from whose inhabitants ordinary civic rights have been taken away as if to prove that even we are not wholly exempt from the working of that yeasty influence which for good or ill is leavening the whole lump of the world. Like the rest of the world, we have our strikes and our angry labour organisations always ready to pick a quarrel with capital or to take up an offered challenge, but we are happily saved from those extremities which sway the rest of the world.

It is written of the men of the days of Noah that they planted and builded until the floods came. The floods were not hurried because of their planting and building, but they took their own time and came. To-day the democratic catastrophe is not being merely ignored by those who, as it would appear, must inevitably be overtaken by it, it is being deliberately propagated and fostered and cockered. In Spain it is being cultivated by the Church. In Germany it is being cultivated by militarism. In Russia it is being cultivated by a blind bureaucracy. In America it is being cultivated by a greedy and arrogant millionism. Wherever it grows, oppression, in one form or another, diligently waters it and digs about it and manures it. Greed and tyranny supply it with the meat it feeds on, and but for greed and tyranny it would not and could not live for a week.

America is a great country, and alike from a distance and close at hand I have contemplated with admiration that national spirit of broad-beamed sanity which is firm under all the froth and efflorescence of its occasional surface excitements. But the American equilibrium has more than once been in danger, and but for the fact that it has tolerated the intolerable the country might very well have fallen into revolution. That Capital should have grown so insolent as to uniform and arm its own troops to shoot down those who rebelled against it, as it did in the case of the Pinkerton men and the Pittsburg rioters, is a thing which would have set almost any other country in the world on fire from end to end.

When the historic perspective glass comes to be turned upon this era it may not, improbably, appear that the United States of America have been as busy about the birth-bed of the New Ideal as even Russia itself. The Russian assistant-accoucheur employs the gallows and the scourge. The instrument of his American *confrère* is the dollar. The one may be yet found to be as effective as the other. The gentlemen who form Trusts which have for their purpose the cruel and merciless exploitation of mankind have only to succeed to have the Beast at their throats with a vengeance. So long as they fail they are welcome to their devices. Even a half success is to be endured with growls and a merely occasional projection of that old blood-stained claw. But suppose that infamous dream once dreamed by a young American had really come to pass, suppose that diabolic purpose of his had been translated into fact, and he had actually "cornered" the world's wheat supply, how long is it to be imagined that he would have been left to enjoy the gains which Satan might have envied him? He would have been

wiped off the face of the earth, and his ending would have been applauded by millions. I can find no name for the man who, being already rich beyond the dreams of avarice, proposes to himself to pinch the pinched belly of a world-wide hunger in order that he may be richer still. Never did any creature so aspire, and for so ignominious a purpose, to shut the gates of mercy on mankind. I should dearly like to have him at command, to sell him prison bread at a hundred thousand dollars a loaf, and, having beggared him, turn him out to work for a living. It would not take a fortnight to convince him that a "corner" in wheat is a thing which has two aspects to it.

All conspiracies to increase the price of things necessary to mankind are in their essence criminal. All combinations which are intended to crush legitimate competition are in their essence criminal. If they are not already criminal at law they ought to be made so. The Beef Trust of which we have recently heard so much is, in plain English, a rascally enterprise. Its modus has been to undersell the local tradesman until it has brought him to ruin and driven him out of house and home, and then, having secured the command of the market, to squeeze the last drop out of the vitals of the public. If that is not an immoral and indefensible proceeding from first to last I know not where to find one. It is an example of blank and wicked injustice, and it is the principle of all the Trusts and the Combines, whether in wheat, or beef, or steel, or tinware, or tobacco, or railways, or shipping, or wheresoever else you may find them engaged. The virtual criminality of the method employed is increased by the fact that it cannot be effectually used except by men who have no real temptation towards it, such as might be urged in partial mitigation of the offence.

It is a weapon which can only be wielded by the rich, and the rich man who robs his neighbour is more guilty than the hungry, shiftless rogue who haunts our poor-houses and gaols. If I am shelterless and sleep in a barn the law will lay its hand on me. If I am shelterless and sleep outside the barn the law will lay its hand on me. If I am starving and lift a raw turnip from a field or a penny roll from a baker's tray I shall go to gaol for it if I am seen and caught. But if I have everything for which the flesh can crave, a palace or two to live in, a yacht or two to take my pleasure in, and a current fortune which not extravagance itself can spend, then I may bite my ogreish mouthful out of poverty's body when and where I will, may glut and surfeit and riot at the cost of the sufferings of thousands, though I could glut and surfeit and riot just as freely without doing harm to any living creature.

Now these men are the makers of anarchy, and whether they will bring the natural fruit of their labours to a full harvest or no depends on the success or failure of the purposes which lie obviously before them. If once the Trusts begin to choke mankind, mankind will choke the Trusts. The dollared gentlemen who are sailing out so gaily to catch the world here, there, and everywhere by the wool do not read the signs and portents of our times. Their best friends can wish them nothing better than commercial disaster. That will not greatly harm them. Their worst enemy could wish them nothing worse than the full fruition of their commercial hope. Destiny has before her a Gladstonian menu of three courses. The Trusts may topple by their own unwieldiness. National and international law may intervene to make financial combinations, which are of the nature of con-

spiracy against private enterprise, illegal. Or—the already exacerbated temper of the Beast will wake, and there will be trouble of a very serious kind. In any case the attempt of a score, a hundred, a thousand millionaires to harness the Beast and drag it at their chariot wheels will fail.

## ETHICS OF WAR.

THERE lingers in my ears a moan from the abyss. It is a quiet sound enough, as sounds uttered in moments of extremity are apt to be. Where pain falls swiftly you may sometimes hear a sudden protest, a cry sharp and fierce ; but when the load of mere weariness has fallen upon a man—when his eyes have been long clouded with darkness and his spiritual palate has long been fouled with a distaste for life, it happens often that the sufferer's complaint is uttered so softly that until you put your heart into your ears you hardly recognise the tone of pain. A thorough-going despair is not disposed to histrionics. But here on my table is a letter concerning the Press of England and the Russo-Japanese War, in which it is made evident that the writer has given up all faith in civilisation and all hope in God. He looks on life and finds it all a ghastly muddle. Here we are, after two thousand years of Christianity, looking on in a sort of pleased complacency at a war of foreign peoples as if it were a show got up for our amusement. Here is a heartless Press gloating over deeds of horror, where it would seem to be its bounden duty so to educate public opinion as to make war impossible. Here are all the nations which might have enforced arbitration and

kept men from cutting one another's throat intent on nothing better than the formation of a ring for the combatants to fight in. The argument from all this is that civilisation is a failure, that Christianity is a failure, that God has made a mistake from the beginning, and that generally things are wrong and all wrong and altogether all wrong, and are never likely to get right again. My correspondent tells me that as he grows older, and as his reading grows wider and more varied, he finds himself more at difference with those whom he has been taught to regard as the best and wisest of mankind. Patriotism and all that the word stands for have grown hateful to him.

Now, we are all prepared to admit that the Evangelical Rifleman is not a consistent figure, and that if the nations were truly Christianised there would be a natural end of war. But where a nation is confronted with a choice of evils it will choose that which appears least dreadful in its promise of consequence, and even where, as occasionally happens, rival claims appear to the onlooker to be balanced with so extreme a nicety that it is difficult to lay the blame of war on the shoulders of either combatant, some treasured principle or point of honour is always involved which makes an appeal to arbitration difficult, if not impossible. That war is an evil in itself is not to be denied. That it is in absolute and flat contradiction to the teachings of those whom both the nations now at death-grips with each other profess to believe inspired is a point which needs no argument to enforce it. The creed of Buddha is no less emphatic in its condemnation of violence than is the creed of Christ. If the civilised nations were to put their professed principles into action we should have a universal disarmament, and there is no man to

whom the vision of the permanent cessation of war is not pleasing.

But we have not yet reached that ideal stage at which the vision can be realised. We have to make our poor human best of the conditions under which we find ourselves. The world is in some respects a sad place to live in, and war in itself is one of the saddest of spectacles ; but it remains a fact that in many instances in the world's history the scourge has proved a blessing in disguise. Arts, crafts, and sciences have been carried at the point of the sword, and in hundreds of the savage places of the earth one great conflict has permanently obliterated the tribal feuds and vendettas which had vexed the population from time immemorial. In our own history we have again and again put a blood-stained end to a reign of blood, and we have found war the only possible harbinger of peace. There are certain lines of Wordsworth which were received with a howl of pious horror when they were first published, which set out this view with uncompromising directness. The poet is arguing simply that whatever happens is permitted by a Divine Ruler, and is part of a scheme which is intended to bring about the final regeneration of mankind. He writes :

That God's most dreadful instrument,  
In working out a pure intent,  
Is man—arrayed for mutual slaughter ;  
Yea, Carnage is His daughter.

That a nation which professed daily its belief in the close and familiar guidance of all human affairs should have revolted, as it did, against a statement which embodied the most integral portion of its own creed was singular.

War is an evil, and it is not a necessary evil in all

cases where it happens ; but there are worse things than war, and one of these things is the enslavement of a people. To speak of a hatred of patriotism and all that the word implies is to talk rank nonsense. A man may treasure the security of his own hearth and all the dear familiarities of home without any ill-will towards his neighbour. He may be at odds with a neighbour who endeavours to do him damage, and he will, of course, fight with all the more determination because he has to defend the interests of those he loves. But his home affections are not in themselves the cause of quarrel, and nobody in his senses proposes to usher in an era of universal peace by the abolition of the family ties. In like manner a man may have a real love for his native village, parish, or city without wishing harm to any other village, parish, or city in the world. When we come to the love of country we reach a sentiment which is not in itself more harmful than the affection for home or for birth-place. It is a virtue, and a noble virtue, and it has led to the doing of great deeds far outside the field of war.

What is the good of an impersonal love for humanity which leaves wife and child uncared for ? A man who has no affection for his own land is not likely to be a good citizen, though the man who hates a foreigner simply for being a foreigner is nothing short of a fool. No nation ever yet inaugurated a war with patriotism as its root motive. Men of all nations have fought *pro patriâ*, but patriotism is not in itself a belligerent quality. Like most human virtues, it can be run into extremes and may be set to vicious ends, but as society exists, and as it will and must exist for centuries to come, if not for ever, it is necessary to the stability of the whole social fabric. In the

war now raging it plays its part on both sides, but it moves towards different ends. For Japan, defeat, unless the country was safeguarded by some interference from without, would mean national annihilation. The curious and delicate arts in which the Japanese have so long excelled would thrive but poorly under the domination of Russia. The aspirations of the people towards equitable laws and individual freedom would most assuredly receive no impetus. If the Far East is to revive from the state of torpor in which it has lain so long, it will be at the bidding of Japan ; and if the growth of civilisation is to receive a rude and sudden check, it will be at the hands of Russia. It is worth while to be a patriot where all the fairer and brighter destinies which can befall a nation are at stake. Russia has no such motive and such cue to passion as Japan. At the worst she can be forced to abandon a policy of aggression, and may suffer loss of prestige. Japan must win or die. The soundest trouncing she can inflict upon her enemy can in no sense be harmful to the best interests of Russia.

These considerations and these alone are active in the formation of a world-opinion beyond the sphere of a selfish material interest. The pretence that the English Press "gloats" over the details of the war, and looks on with an inhuman indifference to the suffering which is caused by it, is wholly baseless. In that strenuous rivalry in which the wealthier journals of this country engage to-day a war is a tremendous expense and harassment. The popular superstition that a time of warfare affords a harvest to the newspaper proprietor is not shared by those whose business takes them behind the scenes. No matter at what expenditure in energy and money, news must be served

hot and hot to an eager public, and the race is practically so level that no individual journal scores a marked and enduring success. The more active of our newspapers are spending money at the rate of many hundreds of pounds per week merely in order that they may not fall behind. As for the recorded successes of Japan, they *are* recorded simply because they have happened, and any reverses which may befall her forces will be chronicled with an equal faithfulness and dispatch. The sympathies of this country are undoubtedly with those to whom we are allied by treaty, and we shall be sorry to see the right side—the side of progressive science and freedom—lose. I am a fairly industrious student of the daily Press, and I have found no gloating over Japanese triumph—nothing but a sober announcement of it so far as it has gone.

But a far more serious aspect of the case I have tried to diagnose may be found in the chafing impatience which is answerable for its graver symptoms. An admitted evil, and an evil which is susceptible of immediate cure, is still allowed to exist among us. Many admitted evils exist among us. Yet that is no argument that our boasted civilisation is a failure, and that the ameliorative influences of religion have proved a fraud and a delusion. This is one of those questions which elude our grasp altogether until we begin to review them in the light of history. The universal history of mankind affords an emphatic protest against the belief that we are given wholly over to Chance or the Devil. Our climb along the upward path is slow. It is sometimes heart-breakingly slow to the young and ardent, but it is sure. The spirit of the nations is against war, and every serious influence of thought is opposed to it. We shall beat

down war in time, but it is not likely that any person now alive will see the victory of the great cause of Peace. The only hope of sanity for the Socialist lies in patience. Not in a patience which is narcotised into inaction, but in a working patience which recognises the wide trend of affairs towards something better than the world has known, and is content to achieve only that atom of reform which is possible to our own time.

This same evil of war which began in brute savagery unspeakable, and often endured even in the more recent history of the world through many miserable years, has undergone a double amelioration within the experience of the present generation. Those very instruments of destruction which appear to add to its terrors tend to make shorter the time of its endurance, and we have trained the blossom of pity to bloom even on the field of death. The human conscience is in process of revolt against the horrors of war. Occurrences which were once incidental to all warfare and were passed as a necessary part of it are now denounced as atrocities. The fact of an abortive Hague Conference carries with it no lesson of despair. We must give this slow-going old world time to move in. There is no reason why we should not shove, and shove with all our might and main. Even an abortive conference for peace is at least a step in the right direction, and failure is the constant forerunner of success. All is not yet for the best in the best of all possible worlds, but the general tendency is the one thing to hold in mind, and the general tendency is undoubtedly for good. In every war raged in recent years an increasing care for non-combatants and for the wounded has been strongly marked ; and we may trust this tendency to grow until the very idea of war

itself becomes so repulsive to the general mind that it will in the end become impossible. The sin of all sins is a despair of human nature. The crowning virtue of all virtue lives in an energetic, working, patient hope.

### OUR MERCANTILE MARINE.

THE condition of our Mercantile Marine, as it affects the supply of men for our Navy, is a matter of vital importance to our welfare as a nation. The very life of England depends upon the efficiency of our fleet, and however generously our people may respond to any appeal for an increase of its strength it is obvious that we cannot create a Navy by the mere building and arming of ships. We must have a maritime population upon which to draw for our fighting forces, and there is not the faintest doubt that our maritime population is fast disappearing. Until the year 1854, when the Navigation Laws were repealed, it was compulsory for a British ship to give employment to a certain proportion of British hands, and, since the coasting trade was then rigorously confined to British vessels, there was always a considerable reserve at the disposition of our defensive forces. The authority of the political economists was against these restrictions, and Adam Smith put the case from the Free Trade point of view with his usual clearness and luminosity. There is no disputing the fact that our sea-borne commerce has enormously increased since the abrogation of the Navigation Laws, and it is quite possible that its growth may be in a very considerable degree attributed to their repeal. But,

granting that this is so, it is certain that the legislation of 1854 has cut two ways. If it helped to build the commercial supremacy of Great Britain it has also helped to wipe out of existence the British seaman. That is an effect which was never contemplated by the Free Traders, and it is significant that the policy of restriction which was so strongly condemned by them has not operated on the lines they indicated in the case of our most serious maritime rival. For a single line of steamers the Germans are without a rival. The Hamburg-American line has the largest tonnage in the world by far. The greatest of our English shipping firms, the Elder-Dempster line, runs to a little over three hundred thousand tons. The Hamburg-American owns five hundred and forty thousand. Its expressed principle is: "The ships of this company being German, none other than German citizens are employed upon them."

Now, whenever a theory runs into sharp contradiction with a fact it becomes worth while to inquire into its validity, no matter what prescript of authority may have warranted its acceptance. The theory here is that it is fatal to a commercial enterprise to restrict those in its employment to the citizens of the country to which that enterprise belongs. The fact is that enterprises conducted on this fatal principle are found to flourish exceedingly. Again, Government subventions are economically wrong, and yet the great German lines which labour under them are beating us hands down both for speed and tonnage. The public conscience of this country, as at present advised, is against both restriction and subvention. It is not easy to see how without one or the other it is possible to arrest the rot which has most undoubtedly set in amongst the men of our mercantile marine. One

or two facts have to be looked at. It is proved that Englishmen are growing unwilling to face the life of those who go down to the sea in ships under present conditions, and it is clear that those conditions will not be improved so long as owners can find men of other nations than our own who are prepared to endure them. It is clear also that to call upon all owners to employ a definite proportion of British hands would compel them to provide a better accommodation and probably to pay higher wages than are now demanded. This would diminish profits, and might put some firms, which are already doing business on a close-cut margin, altogether out of the trade. But I cannot, for the life of me, see anything economically immoral in the suggestion that owners who are ready to guarantee the employment of British hands should be in some way aided and encouraged, whether by an actual bounty or by a remission of fees, which would practically amount to the same thing.

Sir Howard Vincent alleged, in 1904, that, according to the calculation of the Seamen's and Firemen's Union some two thousand British and Irish sailors were then out of a berth in the United Kingdom, whilst in the previous six months no fewer than 6,407 alien sailors arrived to ship on British boats. Monthly returns published in the *Labour Gazette* indicated the employment of a greater number of British seamen in the time cited than in any corresponding period within the previous four years.

The Navy League does a most useful and valuable work in striving to keep the public awake to the urgent necessities of the case, but it is greatly to be feared that its success is not commensurate with its efforts and deserts. The very life and soul of England is the sea, and should her ocean supremacy fall away

she is doomed to extinction as a first-class Power. The proportion of alien seamen in British employ increases year by year. The reservoir to which we owe our existence is drying up, and we take it quite coolly. The political economists have settled to their own satisfaction that is in inadvisable to lay any sort of embargo on alien peoples or their products, or to offer any sort of State encouragement to our own industries, and if facts run up against their theory it is just "so much the worse for the facts." Everybody admits that the British Fleet ought to be of such a strength as to be able victoriously to encounter any probable coalition of foreign Powers. We cannot be asked to maintain such a force as could victoriously resist any possible combination, but the generally accepted standard is that our fleet should at least be equal to any two foreign fleets which might be brought against it. A moment's reflection will show the utter inadequacy of this idea. Between equal forces any apparent chance may turn the scale; and if we are only equal we may be beaten. We must be superior—and heavily superior—to any combination of two Powers. The late Admiral Sir Geoffrey Hornby, speaking on this theme in 1888, said :

I fancy some people will say, "You are a British Admiral, and not content to meet your enemy on equal terms!" Yes, I am that Admiral, and should never be content to meet any enemy in equal force, if by any possible efforts or prevision I could meet him in superior force. And for this reason, that to do so would be to infringe the first principle of warfare

There is no people on earth to whose permanence an irresistible defensive force is so necessary as it is to ourselves.

In 1904 there was a distinct feeling of danger in the air, and although the country and the Press were both very fairly calm about the matter, it was fully

understood that there was a possibility of the whole world being involved in war. This threat to the public peace ought to read us a lesson. In the eternal complications of international politics a general blaze is possible at almost any hour, and it behoves us to be ready. It is useless and absurd to play the part of alarmist, but it would be even more absurd to leave our constant peril out of our calculations and thereby increase it in a scarcely calculable ratio. And let all Englishmen—let all citizens of our Empire—remember what it is we have to guard. We have not merely the great history bequeathed to us by our fathers to edge our honour and endue our thews with steel. The good governance of a third part of the world rests upon us. The German Jingo who so recently found in the confusions of his own mad nightmare a dream of hope, contemplates a world without England as expressing the very acme of desire. But no truly sane and balanced mind—no matter what the nationality of its owner may be—can fail to recognise the fact that a most regal hope for the general welfare of mankind would vanish with the passing of our influence, and could not revive for many a generation. When all is said, when all our failings as a people are counted, we remain, upon the whole, what Emerson called us years ago—the best of existing nations. We have been and we are the greatest civilising agent the world has known since history began. With every passing year the sense of our responsibility has grown more defined, until now we may challenge the world's verdict without fear. Let a justly governed India and an Egypt called to new life like Lazarus from the tomb be brought to witness for us. If ever the day should dawn on a dead England, as day has dawned on so

many dead Empires in the great backward abyss of time, the memory the world will hold of us will be of the first great Power that rightly read its duty to its subject-peoples.

## THE MORALITY OF WARFARE AND THE SUBMARINE.

Nor very long ago the Commander-in-Chief of the French Army wrote an article to demonstrate the feasibility of an invasion of England. To a recent number of the *Deutsche Revue* General Mitzler, a well-known German military expert, contributed an article on "The Armed Peace of Europe and the Question of Disarmament," arriving at the conclusion that it was useless to talk of anything more than a reduction in the number of troops then maintained by the nations, and that this could only be brought about with a view to the increased military efficiency of the remainder. The Press of France had of late been openly jubilant about its newly-invented submarine vessels, which, it was predicted, would render the Navy of Great Britain impotent, and thereby open the way to our destruction as a European Power. All these things, and many others, made it very evident that the world was still so completely under the dominion of the military idea that Peace can be no more than a question of the temporary equilibrium of the Powers. Until some efflorescence of national temper comes to carry away common sense and humanity, the diplomatists will do what they can to avert war, but, unhappily, there are times in the world's history when diplomacy is unavailing, and

when even the diplomatists themselves are infected with the prevailing fever. It is a gravely disturbing sign that we find so many men in high places who, without having any idea of an immediate *casus belli*, regard war as being a practically inevitable thing. That, of course, is the spirit which makes it inevitable. It augments the tendency to search occasion for a quarrel, and when men or nations are in a mood to pick offences the overt rupture of good relations is not far away.

It has long been a question as to what results in actual warfare the recent astonishing developments of the naval forces of the world will bring about. Since steam and armour-plating, breech-loading guns, barbettes, torpedoes, and quick-firing weapons in the fighting-tops came into fashion there has been no such thing as a great naval engagement in which their uses could be fairly tested. The modern vessels of America knocked the effete old navy of Spain into scrap-iron, and Japan did something of the kind with China, but there has so far been no experiment by which we can determine the probable result of a great naval encounter between fleets of equal or fairly equal power. Now—to complicate the mystery which already involves the probabilities of such an encounter—the submarine vessel has become an actual potentiality in any future sea-fight, and it is a literal impossibility to predict what its effect may be. A very timely and interesting book on "Submarine Warfare, Past, Present, and Future," has just been written by Mr. Herbert C. Fyfe (sometime librarian of the Royal Institution), and it is accompanied by an Introduction by Admiral Fremantle and a chapter on the "Probable Future of Submarine Boat Construction" by the late Sir Edward Reed. It comes,

therefore, with authority, and it affords not only fascinating but instructive reading.

It is not my purpose to review the book, but it may be well worth while to set down two or three things which any reader may learn from it. It would appear then, that whilst this novel weapon is not at the present time particularly formidable, there is no doubt in the minds of expert inquirers that it will ultimately become so. It has already been found possible for a boat to remain submerged for a period of not less than fifteen hours, and this is so great an advance upon the powers of the earlier type that it points to the likelihood of an extension in the same direction. We may safely assume that for its own purposes the submarine's capacities in this respect will become complete. The submarine of the future will probably be able to remain under water as long as its commander can easily find it necessary to do so, and that without peculiar danger or peculiar hardship to his crew. In heavy weather the vessel can secure perfect calm by sinking below the violently agitated surface. By the use of instruments of observation, and by the employment of scientific steering guides and gear, it can make its subaqueous way with a reasonable precision which may yet be developed into a genuine accuracy. But when it is submerged it is plunged in cimmerean darkness. It is not at present possible to check a miscalculation without rising to the surface—nor is it possible to trace the direction or to estimate the speed of any moving target. A battleship under weigh would, therefore, be in little danger from it, though it may even now be used with horrible effect against motionless craft. Its purpose is to place under the keel of the vessel which is its objective an explosive of force sufficient

to wreck so much of the lower part of the fabric that the ship will sink. Before firing its infernal machine the submarine will, of course, retire to a safe distance.

I find from the book before me that there are certain people who regard this invention as being even curiously diabolical and cold-blooded. They are spoken of as "the humanitarians," and there is a sort of general suggestion that in discussing the question at all "the humanitarians" are rather off their legitimate beat. Their existence is recognised. It is admitted that there are such people, but it is noticed that we have already consented to the employment of many engines of offence which were described as barbarous at the moment of their introduction, and that the humanitarians at one time or other withheld most of them. It is sometimes urged, when a new weapon of destruction is invented, that the application of science to arms must ultimately make warfare so destructive and terrible that nations will shrink from engaging in it. The worth of that argument may be gauged by two facts. The first is that modern combat is not more terrible in effect than the meeting of armed forces used to be. It is stated that at the battle of Waterloo Napoleon probably lost about thirty thousand men, whilst the loss of the Allies may be said not to have exceeded twenty-two thousand. Fighting at short quarters would appear to have been hotter work than anything we have known since long-range arms of precision were invented. The second fact is that nations are just as easily moved to anger as ever they were, and that the wars resultant from national animosity have been just as frequent since the invention of gunpowder as they were in the days when men fought with lance, and sword, and bow

and arrow, or in those still earlier days when they fought with bludgeons and slings.

It would appear to be argued in some quarters that it does not do to allow the imagination too great a sway in the consideration of these matters, because so long as human passions last, so long there will be warfare, and things which will seem to all nations and to most men to be worth fighting for, and to realise the horrors of battle too keenly might make men unwilling to engage in it. But the fact is that warfare under any conditions whatsoever is so terrible a thing to contemplate in cold blood, is so essentially vile and barbarous a method of adjusting differences, that no merely mechanical adjuncts to its method can increase its ugliness. The mind is dreadfully weighed upon by the idea of a great battleship with a thousand men on board being blown to sudden destruction. Huge furnace-fires flooded—parboiled men welcoming death in their fierce agonies—the stink of the quenched coals filling the doomed ship like the very odours of hell—rage and consternation in those thousand hearts—the hopeless downward plunge. It is all horrible, but does it go beyond the fifty thousand maimed and slaughtered men of the great fight in which the spoiler of Europe was shaken down? Is there not even a consolation of a sort in the reflection that the destroyer has not only spilled a thousand lives, but has knocked the bottom clean out of a million sterling? Because these are conditions under which nations will learn to be slow to make war. They may go snarling at each other's heels as they do now, but a lesson or two under the conditions at which we are arriving may even teach them how dangerous a thing that is.

There is a belief in some minds that a single event

such as I have hinted rather than described would lead at once to the proscription of the submarine as an engine of war by the common consent of civilised nations. I do not think so, and of this, at least, it is easy to be certain. If our neighbours are to go on with their present enthusiasm in the preparation and perfection of this diabolical machine, with everywhere the open and avowed hope of some day shattering the British Navy by its aid, it is the plain duty of our Admiralty to prepare and perfect it also. This nation has not often been more unanimous in the desire for a quiet life than it is at present. It has no quarrel with any Continental Power, and has no wish for any. But the French enthusiasm over the submarine is inspired by one idea alone. It is believed that, whether in actual warfare or by the inspiration of a fear to be implanted in us, it may deprive us of the sovereignty of the seas. It is one of the abominable necessities of our pretended civilisation that every nation should keep pace with every other in armaments, as if the world were a community of footpads and cut-purses. We have never known better than we know to-day that the sole guarantee of our national safety is our power. With every desire for peace, with every recognition of the bitterness of war, with no wish to provoke our neighbours by any apparently aggressive preparation, it is our plain duty to ourselves to adopt this new devil's toy in earnest, to make it the deadliest, "the hittingest and the killingest" weapon we can contrive.

## THE CULT OF CONTENT.

THERE is no more valuable art in the world—when rightly understood and practised—than that which enables a man to resign himself with fortitude and good humour to the unescapable ills and deprivations of life. Not by any means to acquiesce in them so long as there is any reasonable chance of profit in a fight, but—once granting the fact that there is no way of escape—to adapt oneself to the novel and awkward conditions, and to find in the good which still abides with us a sort of added contrasting sweetness. Age is a repellent sort of thing to most people before they become used to it, and, after all, it is not merely a quite endurable condition, but it has certain compensations of its own. I meet heaps of people who tell me that on the verge of three-score I am still a juvenile in years, and that I shall have no right to take airs of seniority for some fifth or fourth of a century or thereabouts. Centenarians, though not yet as common as blackberries, are certainly oftener to be heard of than they were fifty years ago. The span of human life is lengthening. But when the argument is offered to me personally, I incline to answer that I have been younger—a good deal younger—than I am. I am not covetous of years. Even now I take sides with Elia, and would be content to be as I am ; to be “no wiser, no richer, no handsomer,” if Time henceforth would be content to leave me alone.

But Time is content to leave no man alone. As Leigh Hunt writes :

We cannot bid our strength remain,  
Our cheeks continue round ;  
We cannot say to an aged back,  
“Stoop not towards the ground.”

No more cold tub of a morning, with the rejoicing sting of it, and the jolly and invigorating glow to follow. No more boot and saddle of the old campaigning days. No more *chasses d'aventures*, double-barrelled smooth-bore in hand, over a score of miles of field and forest. No more the giant appetite for plain fare begotten by those wintry searches after the bristly monarch of the Ardennes. No more long delicious afternoons beneath the battered old white umbrella, spent in the perpetration of libel on landscape. No more falling in love, most adorable of pastimes. No more bouts with gloves or singlesticks. No more day-long country rambles. Oh, a thousand things have gone out of life ! And yet nothing is wholly lost. How many scores of thousands of miles do I travel in my arm-chair at the fire ? I pass through storms at sea without a qualm—real storms—no mere capful of wind to make a landsman think the weather rough, but seas officially logged “tremendous.” I renew my first experiences under fire, and I am positively exhilarated, and feel not an approach to tremor. I pass on horseback through the stately aisles of a totara forest in New Zealand, or through miles and miles of the ghastly picturesqueness of the ring-barked bush in New South Wales. I have a most noble panorama of mountain scenery. I can sail round Rat’s Point at Wakatipu and bring the Glenorchy range in view, hoary regality lifting its head after hoary regality at incredible distance in that crystal air. Alps and Apennines and Rockies and Selkirks ; huge plunging rivers

swollen by the warm breath of the Shoshone on a thousand square miles of mountain snows ; the never-to-be-forgotten tranquil glories of the Murray in calm flood, a mirror faithful to the tiniest twig of a world-old forest, and all the glories of the sunset and the great stars of the underworld for days and nights together—all these and a thousand other things of equal value are mine.

Your arm-chair traveller is one of the happiest of men. He has none of the discomforts which afflicted him whilst he was yet in active search of the material for whole years of pleasant daydream. No jolting miles in springless stage-wagons. No fear of insect hordes—mallee-fly, or sand-fly, or mosquito. No gathering of dyspepsia in the dreadful pie-zone of the West. No cockroaches in negroid swarms beneath his pillow, in tramp steamers bound for out-of-the-way corners of the world. No fatigue, no famine, no danger. All pure pleasure. A sort of chewing of the cud, good for digestion, good for the nerves, good for the temper. And then youth—that youth which we cannot help regretting for all the compensation coming age brings with it—was always flying off the handle at things a civilised child ought not to smile or sigh for, and coming age is quieter and wiser—is less disposed to be angry and to be in haste. Haste is really the most dilatory thing in the world. “*Festina lente*” is old age’s proverb. All the old are conservative to all the young. George Jacob Holyoake, the founder and for many years the leading spirit of the Co-operative movement, was hissed for his conservatism by the very people who had learned their principles from his lips, simply and purely because he had found out that it is not worth while in this life to be in a hurry about anything.

You can't hurry the development of the apple by pulling open the petals of the apple-blossom. The Socialism of which we hear and write so much nowadays is really nothing more than a vice of haste. There are grey-haired veterans in plenty in the ranks of its disciples, but they have never ripened past the petulance of youth. They seek royal roads to the best things, and the experience of the world has proved the royal road the delusion of a dream. The man who would mend the world stands in need of courage and patience—courage unbreakable and patience without end. Also, if he desires to be of real service, it will pay him to cultivate the senses of humour and proportion. If a man has spent his years to profit he has learned one thing. The world will not be hurried. Bits of it show symptoms of the fieriest haste here and there, and we have wars and revolutions, which leave things very much as they were before. At the best, things get ameliorated, but they do not vitally change.

The plain reason for the slowness of our progress is that the men who propose to prescribe remedies for the aches and sores of humanity attack the symptoms from which we suffer, and not the cause of the symptoms. All the troubles of society arise from human shortcomings either in action or in morals. Men and women are lazy, greedy, selfish, inconsiderate, improvident, ignorant of the facts of nature, and content with ignorance. This is not true of all, but it is true of most ; and no laws, however beneficent or hopeful in themselves, can operate completely on a mass so composed. You get a *contrat social*, and a revolution, and everybody sees the dawn of justice and universal liberty. Everywhere, "heavenward faces all aflame with sanguine imminence of morn ! "

You kill a good handful of aristocrats ; you glut the guillotine with a dreadful plenty ; you have feasts of pikes and enthronements of the Goddess of Reason ; you abolish God—it is really wonderful to notice how very necessary it seems to a certain order of mind to abolish God as a preliminary to the establishment of peace on earth and goodwill amongst men—and the edifice you have reared at so large an expenditure sinks in the slime of its own foundations. Two or three comparatively little things have happened whilst it was building. You have taught a number of very worthless people that their particular form of selfish misrule could become intolerable and unendurable, and could end only in mad revolt and vengeance.

The French Revolution—to accept it only as an example of the comparative futility of even the most considerable social upheaval to effect a radical change—furnishes a complete type of the uselessness of haste. It was directed mainly against the idle and luxurious rich. The idle and luxurious rich have multiplied out of all proportion since its day. Their exactions are made after a different fashion, but the great fact against which the Revolution was a protest remains unchanged, in essence. There are very few of us who do it—and the present writer is miles away from any pretence that he is one of them—but the man who makes the most effectual move towards securing the best of things for the body politic is the man who makes the best use of himself. I can conceive nothing so likely to be of value to the world at large as the creation of a general desire for just thinking, for the appreciation of truth in the large, not as it affects this dogma or that in religion or in politics, but as it bears upon the facts of human nature as they are clearly to be seen—so clearly that a wayfaring man,

though a fool, need not err therein. One fact stands out plain as the sun at noonday. No social movement for the amelioration of the condition of mankind has ever been permanent unless it has based itself upon a change for the better in the character of those on whom it is meant to operate. One of the sanest and most practical of all modern movements for making the best of things is to be found in the Salvation Army, and the Army's very reason for being is its aim to make good citizens out of bad ones, to change the inward man as well as the mere environment of the outer. It is necessarily a long and weary business, and it will fail to save many from narrow and even perverted views of life. But views are of little importance—as I do not easily tire of saying—so long as in the main they tend towards good citizenship, the one ultimate aim of all social reformers, and not the least considerable amongst the aims of all genuine religions.

The world's main lesson to us all is patience in effort—effort in patience. We have all got to keep pegging away, each one according to his lights. We make confused work of it, but on the whole we move. The world is more humane than it once was. It gets wiser—very, very slowly—but still it does get wiser. The civilised part of it is awake to many facts of nature, the right understanding of which is necessary to our well-being, though even our immediate ancestors scratched along with no knowledge of them, and exposed to all manner of scourges. To the man in a hurry the whole outlook is dark enough. To the man who has no faith in a guiding Intelligence and a settled end it must needs be exasperating. I suppose there have been few of those who have engaged themselves in any constructive work—even if it were no<sup>t</sup> more than

the building of an argument—who have not known the impatient, impossible desire to throw the whole thing into being with one impetuous and conquering gesture. Says Lord Byron :

Could I wreak  
Myself upon expression in one word,  
And that one word were lightning, I would speak.

Just so. But the aspiration is that of the spoiled child, when all is said. It is natural enough, and it is vastly more inviting to contemplate than “that dry drudgery at the desk’s dead wood” which forms so large a part of every intellectual worker’s life. Only it is impossible, and there is nothing left for anybody who desires to do anything but just to keep pegging away with effort in patience and patience in effort, until at last the long day’s work is done, and the restful night cometh in which no man can work.

### THE IDEAL OF GOD.

I have before me another of those cheap reprints of works of science of which I have spoken as having recently made their appearance upon the railway bookstalls. We have had already Haeckel’s “Riddle of the Universe” and Matthew Arnold’s “Literature and Dogma,” and this time we are presented with the late Grant Allen’s “Evolution of the Idea of God.” The fact that such works as these can be purchased at so very small a price is, on one side of it, a strong testimony to the growing intelligence of the unmoneyed classes in this country, and to the interest they are beginning to take in abstract themes. It is evident that the books could not be issued in this form at all unless many thousands

of immediate purchasers could be found for them ; and the evidence they afford of the growth of popular thought is very welcome. But it is to be noticed that, with whatever design these works were written by their individual authors, most of them are being re-issued now in support of a certain materialistic propaganda. The idea which inspires their publication is that they make, one and all, against ecclesiasticism. In so far as they tend to the liberation of the human mind from the fetters it has worn for so many years they cannot fail to be welcomed by all friends of intellectual liberty ; but it is noticeable that, in the very act of releasing mankind from one set of fetters, they rivet on another. The attitude of the true intellectual freeman may be very briefly stated. He will as positively refuse to be coerced or dragooned by the scientific crowd as he has hitherto refused to be dragooned by the ecclesiastics, and in the end it will probably be found that truth, here as elsewhere, lies between the two extremes of thought.

In the preface to the book which now lies before me Mr. Grant Allen stated that his pages contained the essence of the thought of twenty years, and that the book itself had taken ten years in writing. This one can well believe. But in spite of all the careful learning of the work one can hardly fail to see that he had slipped aside from what is, after all, the real issue. In his final paragraph he set down the conclusion of the whole matter as he saw it. "In one word, I believe that corpse-worship is the protoplasm of religion, while admitting that folklore is the protoplasm of mythology, and of its more modern and philosophical offshoot, theology." "The protoplasm of religion" is a useful and illuminative phrase. In physical science men have probably dug down as far

as the protoplasm ; but the thing for which the mind of man truly cries out is, the protoplasm of that protoplasm ; in plain English, a knowledge of the real origin of things. This in its present stage of development science cannot bring us. We are presented once more with the old Hindoo idea of a world supported by an elephant standing upon a tortoise who is poised upon nothing ; and this leaves us in our state of original wonder and dismay. Here is your protoplasm. Well and good. But where is that force which makes the protoplasm a living thing ? You can determine to a nicety the chemical constituents of any ovum, but that mysterious power of regeneration which the egg possesses still evades the most cunning and capable of analysts. You have positively got to get back to the inspirational idea. There is, or has been somewhere, a power not cognisable to the human intellect, which originally breathed into the humblest organism the breath of life ; and when the materialistic seeker after truth has done his most patient and most learned best he has left the true riddle of the universe unsolved. At the very threshold of this great theme we encounter the eternal question as to how life began at all, and here the scientist cannot help us.

And precisely as it is in the sphere of animal life, so it is in the world of thought. After much difficulty, but in the end with some real approach to knowledge, you may trace the " how " of growth. We see the savage in his earliest stages, symbolising his spiritual hopes and fears by this or that little bit of material trumpery. He expresses a terror of the unknown by a bit of rag. He makes a particular place sacred by a cleft stick. There is nothing too infantile to body forth to him the mystery in the

midst of which he moves. There are few things more fascinating in the whole range of anthropological study than the branch of it to the consideration of which Mr. Grant Allen invited us. We see the primitive man with the rudest conception of a Something which is to be appeased, and the rudest conception of the means of appeasement, and we watch the growth alike of the concept and the means until we arrive at those noble fanes of prayer which are everywhere lifted by Buddhist and Brâhman, by Mohammedan and Christian; and we find that step by step as the altar has grown in beauty and in grandeur, the conception of the Power to which it is dedicated has grown also. That root impulse of reverential fear which provokes the savage to mark his tapu on a place made sacred with a bit of a broken branch has taught civilised man to build vast temples to Osiris and Allah and Jehovah. We may grant the historian of human thought everything he asks for in this direction, but he has not helped us by one inch towards the solution of the true problem, which is why and by what force the instinct of worship was implanted in the human mind.

On his very first page Mr. Allen made a most striking admission—proving himself a true man in controversy and an honest seeker after realities. “An evolutionary God, we may well believe, might prefer in his inscrutable wisdom to reveal his own existence and qualities to his creatures by means of the same slow and tentative intellectual gropings as those by which he revealed to them the physical truths of nature.” There is no supposition so natural. There is no theory which is so well in accord with all the facts of life so far revealed to us by science. According to Herbert Spencer, the original concept

of a god was probably that of the ghost of a human being. This ghost, apart from the mere fact of his invisibility, would be endowed with merely human attributes, but in course of time he became super-human in power and swiftness. The conception was still almost purely physical in spite of the awe and mystery in which he was shrouded, and hundreds of thousands of years from the birth of the idea we find the sons of God wooing and wedding the daughters of men, with the consequence that "there were giants in those days." With the birth of the idea of monotheism amongst the Jews we find God still a magnified man with human passions, subject to griefs, and resentments and repents just as we are. In the very earliest days of the monotheistic concept we find that God was the special patron of a nation, and, therefore, alone to be revered by the people of that nation, but we do not find that He was regarded as reigning alone. Apart from that great Satanic spirit which was in eternal conflict with His purposes, there was an accepted belief in the existence of other gods who, whilst far inferior in power to the Deity of the Hebrews, still in some degree shared His attributes. It may be said that the first great upward step in the evolution of the human mind in its attitude towards the Godhead was taken when the belief in a single personality became general—that the second was made when the idea of paternity was attained—and that the third stage was arrived at when the anthropomorphic theory was dismissed in the immortal phrase, "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

The belief in the manlike form of the Deity lingered on for centuries, as we may see in countless examples

of mediæval art, but it died out finally, and it had become purely symbolical long years before its actual disappearance from the canvas of the painter. But as the conception became remoter it became more majestic and effulgent. No longer the ghost of a savage man filling with superstitious terror some gloomy forest shade; no longer the familiar and friendly Presence which walked with man in a garden of Paradise; no longer the parochial Deity who nerved the arms of a single chosen people, and taught them strategy in battle, but the great Maker of all we see and know, the infinitely removed, the unspeakable, unthinkable central Force of an unspeakable, unthinkable universe. The growth of this conception has moved with an equal pace with the growth of the human mind. It is a dogma in one theologic school that truth is in itself progressive. The thesis is no more absurd than some other theologic dogmas with which the world is more familiar. Truth is eternal and immutable, but amidst "ten thousand shifting lights and shapes" we get but glimpses of it, and it appears to change only because our vision is better adjusted to perceive it.

It is strange to notice how homogeneous the whole course of nature proves to be. One can trace back the fruitful wheat to a barren grass just as one can trace back the emotional and thinking apparatus of the accomplished man to its roots in the animal thoughts and emotions of the savage. And herein if you will think of it is a marvellous analogy. There is in every vegetable seed a something of compulsive energy which imperatively draws towards itself those chemical constituents of the soil which are necessary to the fertilisation and growth of that particular

order to which it belongs. Plant in the same foot of garden ground a dozen seeds of different vegetables and flowers. Without any sort of possibility of error they will draw from the soil which surrounds them just those elements of which they stand in need, and no other. Your lettuce will be succulent and mild, and your radish pungent, and your blossom rich in sweet odour, all out of the same narrow foot of earth. So your scarcely-seeded grass and the wheat of which it is the poor progenitor will flourish side by side, each drawing from its parent earth the constituents necessary for its own development. And in a manner strangely analogous the human soul draws, in the fit proportions for it, its nutriment from the environment in which it is rooted—the innutritive grass of the undeveloped intellect fruiting in a concept of God as the mere spook of some dead nigger, and the wheat-sown soul of civilised man fruiting in a richer thought how far removed even yet from truth God only knows, but affording at least a nutriment by which the soul may live.

The lasting and pressing question presented to the mind by these developments is not solved—is not even touched—by any knowledge of their history. We can learn the “how” of it all. We may plant a thousand separate seeds of the same order; we may pluck them at any stage of life; we may subject them to chemical analysis; we may put them atom by atom under the microscope; we may trace every step in growth. And when we have exhausted the resources of science we are just as far from understanding the “why” of that compulsive and selective power by which the seed draws to itself those constituents which are necessary to it. So it is with that instinct of worship which is implanted in the human soul. We can trace

its history in Mr. Grant Allen's laborious yet charming pages ; but we find there no indication of the power which set it working. What we are still left to search for is the life-impulse, and the secret evades us, and will always evade us, until we surrender our shallow little materialisms, and acknowledge the existence of a power which is beyond our learning. Farther and farther recedes the Divine Ideal from our researches, but more and more certain becomes its actual existence, more and more clearly its tendencies are revealed to us. The materialist comes swaggering with his challenge, and I can but answer that by every law of nature yet revealed, and by every law of logic, there *is* an intelligent and purposed Guide whose laws are inexorable and just, and whose one undoubt-able revelation of Himself is in a law of progress towards righteousness in thought and conduct.

### THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

IF in the whole trend of modern serious thought there is one effort more apparent than another it is that which so strenuously presses forward towards a solution of the problem of man's presence here on earth, his *raison d'être*, his true association with his surroundings, his relations to the past and to the future. In a word, the tendency is towards the revision of old forms of theology, and the establish-ment of some new scheme of reconciliation with things as we partly know and partly hope them to be. Even so far, this effort has met with considerable success of a sort. It may not yet have begun to offer to mankind a settled conclusion as to the puzzles which afflict us, but it has at least in some degree

humbled the professional theologian, who, outside the citadel of one great orthodox creed, dares no longer proclaim with the ancient aspect of certainty many doctrines which are still included in the authorised teachings of the Churches. To take the most striking of all examples, the old belief in the eternity of punishment is practically abandoned. The late Mr. Spurgeon, formally and solemnly, and with an apparently complete sense of its awesomeness, revived the horrible superstition of Calvin as to the presence of "babes, a span long, in hell." But the proclamation of that dreadful belief had no influence upon the alert modern mind. Its effect was confined to the vulgarest intelligences, and the cloud of blackness it was meant to conjure from the dark ages of thought was scattered into nothing for the overwhelming majority of nineteenth-century Englishmen.

There were ages upon ages in which the worst from of impiety lay in the attempt to understand the purposes of God. They were not to be questioned or inquired into, but were to be devoutly accepted, as they were affirmed to be, by any given body of teachers who held local rule. This is so far changed that no higher intellectual duty is now recognised than is involved in the fight against pretended authority in such matters. The doctrine of mental freedom is vindicated. Bigotry is not dead, but its fangs are drawn. Superstition is not yet eradicated from the minds of men, but we are licensed to make escape from it without incurring social pains and penalties. Opinions go free of the old toll of axe, and stake, and thumbscrew, and even of the modified troubles of imprisonment and fine. It has come to be seen that the devoutest of minds are not necessarily those which unquestioningly accept the teaching of authority,

but those which bend themselves seriously and fearlessly to the search for truth wherever it may be.

Perhaps the least explicable of human beliefs is that which, whilst proclaiming the inherent goodness and justice of the Deity, contrived to reconcile this conception with that of pre-destination. Nothing more clamorously inconsistent within itself could be devised. A Being all-powerful, all-wise, all-good, creates certain other beings with the full knowledge that he is sending a majority of them to unescapable and cureless ruin—not merely to penal servitude throughout a brief and troublous and degraded life on earth, but to burn in unquenchable fires for ever and ever and ever. The mere logical impossibility of the thing is clamant to the deafest ears which are not crammed with the theological wad, and it was yet a crime of deepest dye to doubt the patent nonsense for many generations. Either the attributes are false, or the actions attributed to their possessor are the most unnameable libels. If God is good, pre-destination is a lie. If pre-destination were a truth, God would be a demon. So, through the ages, men, awed and coerced by authority as they were, painfully came to see, and in these days the candid thinker has no fear and no triumph when he offers the belated exponent of this extraordinary creed his choice of the horns of the dilemma. Nothing could more completely illustrate the comparative emancipation of the mind than the fact that such a proclamation as the foregoing can now be made in peace and safety. It makes no pretence to novelty, for it is one of the main points round which the war of thought has raged for generations. But the man who first conceived the idea of rebellion against that special dogma was beset with fear and trembling, and the man who

first spoke his belief aloud took his life in his hand, and was believed by many to be eternally undone.

We can never have done with the man-made God, because we cannot get outside our own limitations, and it does not seem unnatural to believe that the Deity is much beyond our highest conceptions, however we may soar. There is no logical reason why we should accept a monotheistic creed as against the old Persian belief in rival and equal influences of good and evil, but faith is not a birth of logic, and its forms are geographically defined. You may draw a map of creeds as easily as a map of nations. But the general consensus of the highest minds and of the most cosmopolitan culture is in favour of monotheism ; and what these are now striving to effect is a reconciliation of the fact that good and evil proceed apparently from the same source with the belief that the source itself is untainted by any evil. And here it is worth while to note that one reason for the monotheism of our most civilised nations is the degraded state to which we have reduced God's great antagonist, as credited by the creeds of the East. Luther throws an ink-bottle at him. St. Dunstan takes him by the nose with a pair of red-hot pincers. In a modern novel which has found a million of readers, he lives in a London hotel and takes perfumed baths with a probable, though not expressed, desire to drown the smell of sulphur. Even in the pages of Goethe he is the poorest kind of village conjurer, frightening students with squibs and crackers. Is this the Deity's protagonist ? The worthy foe of that eternal Source of good whose "spangled heavens, a shining frame, their great Original proclaim " ? Well, barely.

But the idea of Deity—and of one Deity—is rooted. The school of materialists, who seemed at one time

as if they were going to swamp us all by mere force of an authority as little tolerable as that of their elders, the theologians, has closed in blank fiasco. Their pretence of having explored the universe was reduced to the fact that they had made a more or less intimate acquaintance with certain microscopic atoms of our own microscopic part of it. As I have said before, having explored a single cabinet in the universal museum and inventoried its contents, they had arrived at the belief that there were no more apartments to survey and no more cabinets to examine. But the materialists are mostly dead and the best of them have recanted. There is something beyond their ken, and they have learned to know it.

But if the bones of the theologian strew one side of the battle-field, and those of the materialist are whitening the other, is there any dawning creed which reveals any kind of rest for Investigation's weary wing, any halting-place in the great void of search and doubt? Let us notice for a moment what the doctrine of reincarnation specifically and by implication teaches, and let us ask if there is a possible answer to our question presented in it. You see that, first of all, it is necessary to our peace that we should—in the Miltonic phrase—"justify the ways of God to man." We have to reconcile a mass of apparent injustice and inequality of chance with a final sense of justice. I propose to deal with the old Eastern explanation of facts by a blending of modern Western science. The mystery of the origin of life is as yet insoluble. The theory of spontaneous generation exploded in the laboratory bottles of many chemists thirty years ago. At our best we arrive at a "protoplasm" already inspired with the mysterious and

inexplicable quality of life. According to those who, by scientific inquiry, are best qualified to judge, we reach all forms of life from this small avenue. Mollusc, fish, bird, quadruped, biped succeed each other, with infinite differentiation in between. Man is accomplished, and results in Plato and Verulam, in Shakespeare and Homer, in the intellect which withstands and returns the shocks of pure thought and the intellect which withstands and returns the shocks of thought and emotions in alloy. Man has achieved his obvious utmost, in whatever unknown fields he may shine hereafter.

This is where the Eastern idea, grafted on the Western knowledge, grows to be so powerful. Out of the slime to Homer and Shakespeare! You imagine an infinite progression, from protoplasmic slime to highest-thinking and noblest-striving man. No form of leaf or flower or root, or blade of grass, or worm, or insect escapes this all-embracing chain of evolution. These living entities, you and I, have passed through these experiences. It may be there is nothing we have not been. There may be no experience divorced from our intelligence. We are men to-day because we are qualified to be men by events which have happened in generations distant by millions of years from our recognised beginnings. The hog is a hog and the ox an ox, because he has so far achieved a less lofty development than our own. The mosquito is promoted to be a house-fly ; the house-fly gains experiences which qualify him to be a honey-maker. The best of bees is a jewelled honey-sucker in his next estate. The gorilla, who in his time has learned wisdom, may become a Bosjesman, the Bosjesman a Boer, and the Boer may be reborn a Parisian, even though he go to the Quartier St.

Antoine. And in every one of the myriad divisions if the creature behave himself in accord with the laws of his species he shall be promoted with a rapidity or a slowness proportioned to his deserts.

His deserts ? Here lies the problem after all. But the Eastern presentation of it has reduced its doubts to a minimum, whilst our theologies make a maximum of them. The Universalists, who insist that everybody shall be saved, have a creed which in its way is just as inexorable as that of the damnable Calvinists, but on every ground of sense and justice a million times more likely to be true. Whatever experiences you may pass through, you have just *got* to be saved, and there is an end of it. However evil your experiences and instincts may be, there is no escape for you from the invincible mercy of God. It is an ignorant return to the old cosmogony, to which every departure from one estate to another was like a plunge from a spring-board in a new race for life. The suicide's tumble, the flop of the drunkard into eternity imply a necessary disability in that first instant in which the power to sustain oneself in the waters of a new estate must need be the most essential. The well-found, well-experienced swimmer dives, and, coming up a long way beyond these ineptitudes, lands in the environment prepared for him. And here at least we glimpse at an understanding of the wild spin of free will and fate. If every sentient creature must know all experiences of life, if he pass through all imaginable grades, and from the earliest to the latest exercise an influence upon his own career, if promotion be true to merit all the way, there is a partial solution of our problem found. Not a total solution, for the equality of the power to exert original effort is still unsettled. But deeper down than one can altogether

fathom lies a sense of justice, of fair-play. It is in the yearning for that sense that men turn to the old mythologies of transmigration, which may, after all, have the germ of truth in them.

The most puzzling of puzzles, the most bewildering of problems, lie behind all this. They are two-fold. The first opens the old question of fate and free will. It is evident that no sentient creature in any scale of existence can have merit unless it have also some form of choice, and it is impossible to conceive a system of reward and punishment, of any sort whatever, as being just unless some degree of responsibility is an integral part of it. The idea of rewarding a mechanism is obviously absurd. The second puzzle, which is practically just as insoluble as the first, lies in the conservation of the Ego, the individual conscious mind. If I have been ooze and mollusc, fish and bird, am I still the creature made of my own experiences ?

As old mythologies relate  
Some draught of Lethe might await  
The slipping through from state to state.

Have I progressed, and, if so, have I forgotten the methods of my progression ? Against the idea that I began in perfection and fell from it in the person of a sinful ancestry all history cries out. Whatever we know points upward. It is only Superstition which casts a backward finger at a vanished glory. The glory is before us. The slime and ooze of an old world are behind. The worst man we have to-day in our half-civilised cities is the moral master of the contemporary savage. Our Jack-the-Ripper is our execration, and is yet the equal of the Thug, who had a whole theology behind him. We are saying farewell to theologies, possibly in something too much of a hurry, but we are welcoming freedom of thought, which

is a handsome substitute for them. The slug of yesterday is the swallow of to-day. May it fly to fairer regions !

## NATURE AND SUPERNATURE.

FINDING the other day on a station bookstall a slight brochure entitled, "Lectures and Essays by Thomas Henry Huxley," and priced at sixpence, I bought the pamphlet simply with the idea of finding out what particular lectures and essays of the late great controversialist had been chosen to make their appeal to so wide and cheap a public. Rather to my surprise I found its contents to consist mainly of such of Mr. Huxley's writings as were directed against dogmatic theology. These productions have never seemed to me to be amongst his most useful or his most pleasing contributions to the thought of his own day, but my surprise at the restricted and polemical character of the selection was diminished when I found that it was fathered by the Rationalist Press Association. Just, as it were, to save the face of the compiler, a chapter or two on evolution find a place in the collection, but their tone is as merely materialistic as that of all the rest, and the intention of the little enterprise is conspicuous. It is to display Mr. Huxley in his most truculent aspect with regard to the so-called supernatural—as the triumphant swashbuckler who championed with so swiping an energy those doctrines of materialism which he helped to make a fashion in his own day.

I hope I am not to be understood as expressing any irreverence towards a man who towered above the

intellectual average of his time, and was as worthily honoured for his courage and tenacity as for his mother wit and learning. Mr. Huxley in controversy was very much what Mr. Jessop is in cricket. When he "comes off" he can score his twenty in an over, but he does not always judge the pitch of the ball, or the "work" which has been put into it by the bowler, and in spite of his dash and skill he has a knack of skying chances to his opponents all over the field. It is the rustic cricket of controversy, but it is rustic cricket at its actual best—at moments at its imaginable best—and our materialistic batsman slogs here a ball out of bounds, and here slams another on to the pavilion roof to our great exhilaration and enjoyment—or, rather, let us say, it used to be so. The modern umpire would often pronounce Huxley out first ball. To drop the simile, which has probably done all the service it is capable of rendering, a reperusal of these essays leaves upon the mind a sense of the old-fashioned which is not to be avoided. Huxley was a pioneer. He was in the van or in front of the van, and now he is a laggard at the rear of progress.

It is not surprising that it should be so. The conditions under which Huxley passed his later years were beginning to assume a good deal of the modern complexion, but he was born in 1825, and his mind was already robustly matured a full half-century ago. In the fifties of the nineteenth century thought moved much less swiftly than it moves to-day, because there was not that direct and immediate exchange of controversial thought in the midst of which we moderns have our being. The onlookers at the intellectual bout to-day may almost be said to hear the grind of steel on steel and to see the lightning flash of riposte

following on riposte. Huxley not only lived in a more leisurely age—active and rich in effort as it must have looked to himself and his contemporaries—but he was in himself one of those men who are characteristically insensitive to the opinions of others when once their own minds are definitely made up. To put the point in the plainest English, he was something of a bigot. The careful and discerning reader of his pages soon learns that his ideas dogmatise to him. It is not nearly so much that he owns certain beliefs as that the beliefs own him. He began his war against ecclesiasticism early, and he kept it going to the end, without the softening of one asperity or the diminution of one intellectual assurance. His enmity to all priestly forms of thought was the foundation on which his militant materialism was reared. He looks curiously old-fashioned already, and, in spite of his great faculties of eloquence and irony and scholarship, he is on his last legs as an intellectual force.

But it is very interesting even yet to notice how so keen and resolute a thinker can unconsciously surrender himself to the adversary. On page 70 of the brochure of which mention has been made there may be found a footnote, in which Huxley expresses himself in these words : “ I employ the words ‘supernature’ and ‘supernatural’ in their popular sense. For myself, I am bound to say that the term ‘Nature’ covers the totality of that which is. The world of psychical phenomena appears to me to be as much part of ‘Nature’ as the world of physical phenomena ; and I am unable to perceive any justification for cutting the Universe into two halves, one natural and one supernatural.” These words do undoubtedly afford the main justification which is sought for by the enemy of materialism. The modern opponent of

Huxley's creed has invented a word to define his position. He no longer speaks of the "supernatural," but of the "supernormal," meaning thereby those effects and appearances which are presented to us in obedience to laws as yet imperfectly understood or even wholly dark to the ordinary intellect of mankind, though, if the facts themselves be proven, they are obviously and indubitably a part of "Nature."

Huxley was of great service in his day and generation in his unceasing demand for evidence in any case in which the commonly-recognised and well-understood laws of Nature would appear to be abrogated ; but we are to some extent—not perhaps very considerable, but quite perceptible—nearer to a knowledge of the mysteries of psychic phenomena than we were, and, at least, we have made this one broad and clear advance : that many of the opponents of materialism are as keen in their desire for trustworthy evidence as its most ardent champions ever were. So far, I am persuaded that the true attitude is one of keen inquiry, rather than of exact belief. For my own part, I regard the possibility of conviction with hope, but I am not going to be convinced on hope, and the way to common intellectual honesty seems to me to lie in a diametrically opposite direction to that indicated by the clerics. We find the saintly John Henry Newman, for example, scornfully exclaiming against those who ask for proof of alleged miracles : "As if moral and religious questions required legal proof, and evidence were the test of truth!" As if there were any other test of truth! We find the same venerable authority assuring us elsewhere that "religious error is in itself of an immoral nature." There is an easily recognisable sense in which all error is opposed to sound morality, but

which is the more immoral—that of the man who blindly and without a hint of inquiry accepts that which his intellect denies, or that of the man who after honest and careful inquiry is compelled to recognise the inadequacy of evidence? Huxley, in dealing with the last-quoted phrase, deals one of his smashing blows : “ Beloved brethren, that we may be spotlessly moral, before all things let us lie.”

It is less moral to stifle the intellect than to exercise it, but the mistake into which Huxley fell was to regard the intellect as the sole court of appeal in spiritual matters. There have always been men, and amongst them the wisest and the best, who have been touched to finer issues than the merely intellectual. It is unjust in the last degree to assume that their mental standpoint is indicated in Huxley’s savage formula. But the reader is already asking what is the difference between us of the one side and the materialists on the other, if we are just as keen as they are to insist on the production of full and satisfactory proof before we will admit any alleged fact to our credence. Is not that the materialist’s whole intellectual duty? Precisely. But just as the cleric will fasten upon us, if he can, his own particular form of faith in defiance of the natural judgment, so the apostle of the “ actual ” would confine our speculations and inquiries within that cramped space with which he has himself been contented. We endure the buffets of both sides. The ecclesiast is angry at our presumption. The hard-and-fast man of science—a much rarer person than he used to be—derides us for our frivolity. We are daring dreadful dangers by our intrusion into hidden things. We are mere fools for imagining that there are any hidden things worth intruding upon. We stand between two crowds of

people, each of which begs the question *holus bolus*. Our present suspicion is that neither of them is right, and we have the same answer for each : " You are trying to circumscribe the rights and the efforts of the human mind, and whilst we can lift a hand to fight you shall not so confine them. We conceive it to be the duty of man to encourage his every faculty to fullest exercise. Man does not live by brain alone, nor will he achieve a mastery of himself by any surrender to credulity."

I know nothing more intensely pathetic in literature than Newman's "*Apologia*," wherein is told the history of a brave, luminous, and beautiful soul which out of sheer weariness narcotised itself with the smoke of doctrines it disdained, built its own pyre, set light to it, and lay down upon it to a euthanasia of courage and endurance. For that, and neither more nor less than that, is the history in brief of one who, finding that his lagging footsteps could not reach the home of Truth, took a half-way house towards her, and went to sleep there for good and ever. The bigotry of science is less picturesque and makes no appeal to the heart at all. So long as it is not reverent of the aspirations and inquiries which lie outside its stiffly defined boundaries—and bigotry is never reverent—it is an impertinence. The man of science knows no more than you or I about the secrets of the unseen world. He may be and sometimes is devoutly religious—as often from temperament as from any conviction on evidence, and in that case he is the best friend of progress, because he is prepared to bring a trained intellect to the solution of welcome problems. The bigot of science is of little more service, if any, than the bigot of ecclesiasticism. What the world is asking for just

now is the patient and impartial investigation of every road which may, even conceivably, lead to knowledge; and what the world asks for it will get.

## ARE OTHER WORLDS INHABITED ?

ALTHOUGH it cannot be urged that Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace, the veteran and illustrious co-worker with Darwin in the field of evolution, has provided the scientific world with an entirely new scheme for discussion, it may at least be said that in his very remarkable book on "Man's Place in the Universe" he has brought to the consideration of an enchanting theme such a catholicity of learning and such a ripeness of philosophic reasoning as was never before expended on it. The position taken up by Dr. Wallace may be very broadly and succinctly stated. It is this. The material conditions which have resulted in the evolution of mankind are so complex that it is improbable that they ever have been or ever will be produced in their entirety in any other planet, and that as a consequence, life, as we broadly conceive it, is not likely to exist in any other sphere than our own. The great scientist conceives of what is known to us as the Milky Way as being as it were the equator of the universe, not merely as it is telescopically revealed to us, but as it actually exists. He is not prepared to accept the idea of an infinite expansion of space peopled by whirling suns and planets, but he regards the solar system as being at or near the centre of a finite universe which is more or less within the ken of man, and if this be so he argues from it a certain stability of action which is probably not characteristic

of the outlying worlds. We know roughly the phases through which our own planet has passed. It is not necessary for thoughtful readers to be reminded of the stages of fluent heat, of the gravitation of solids, of the gradual evolution of oceans and atmosphere, of the slow beginnings of organic life, of developments from forms purely vegetal into animal forms scarcely distinguishable in type, of the processes of evolution by which the first faculties of locomotion were achieved, of the birth of the vertebrate, the mammal, and the man.

For the production and development of these extraordinary changes in the forms of organic life certain special conditions were required. The very first and the most essential of all these we may take to have been a marked regularity in the general reduction of temperature. That glacial conditions may have succeeded equatorial conditions, that equatorial conditions may, since the first peopling of the planet, have succeeded glacial is a question of merely local consideration. There is ample reason to believe that whole swarming species, from the flying dragon to the foraminifera, were extinguished by mere climatic change, and it has long been a theory of my own that in very recent times indeed, speaking from the geologic standpoint, the spin of this planet had not been finally settled and determined for it by the gravitational impulse which it now obeys with so noticeable a smoothness. But the changes here indicated, though they would be regarded as cataclysmal if they occurred at a time when thinking as well as sentient beings inhabited the planet, were, after all, of a local character, and did not greatly affect the general temperature of the globe, which may be regarded as the first factor in the development of life. There can

never have been a stage in the history of our planet since the formation of our oceans when heat did not regulate humidity, and it is exactly as the natural supply of steam to the atmosphere has drained away that intelligence and purely animal development have attained to their higher stages.

Thus to achieve the results which have been arrived at by organic evolution on our native planet demanded a certain stability in our revolution about the central luminary of our system. Our orbital course varies only four in ninety-four from perihelion to aphelion (or thereabouts), and the degree of retardation or acceleration in the pace at which we pursue the path marked out for us is no more than one in nine. We may therefore assume that the necessary stability for a regular evolution exists here. The element of distance from a central luminary has also to be taken into consideration. In the Grecian fable the wings of Icarus melted as he approached the sun. We know better now, and we are aware of the extremes of cold which haunt our higher atmosphere. Yet it is evident that if we were carried, atmosphere and all, nearer to or farther from the sun we should experience a marked difference in the intensity of his rays, and all possibilities of organic life might either be scorched or frozen out of us by the accident of propinquity or distance.

Those local displacements of temperature to which allusion has been made would not affect the mean temperature of the planet, but they are believed to have abolished whole species, and they help to illustrate the fact that the inception, development, and continuance of organic forms on the surface of the globe must always have been subject to the influence of comparatively small gradations of heat and cold.

The severest conditions of warmth and moisture under which animal life can be sustained appear to have been in favour of prodigious physical growths, but the higher animals could not conceivably have sustained existence except in a far more moderate heat and in a purer and clearer air. Man, as he existed in his earlier stages, and before he had learned the art of defending himself against the assaults of climate, must have been the most fragile of them all. Dr. Wallace's argument as to the absolute necessity of the stability of solar conditions and of the distance-relations between the great source of heat and our own globe is therefore abundantly justified. The realm of entirely verifiable truth is small, but we may quite reasonably presume that all the worlds of which we have knowledge are composed of the same materials as our own, and that the growth of organic life in them would thus be subject to rules identical with those which are universally recognised by physiologists and biologists. The question posed by Dr. Wallace is as to whether those precise conditions which have made the existence of man possible on earth exist elsewhere.

It is probable—it is indeed almost certain—that there are a practically inestimable number of planets circling around the countless suns which people the universe which are and must always remain invisible to us. In thousands upon thousands of these worlds it is not impossible that some may have passed through similar experiences to our own. It is not even impossible that in some the conditions may have been almost identical. It is not even impossible that in the tremendous laboratory of Nature there may be forces which are capable of creating life under laws which would be immediately fatal to any form of it

which is known to ourselves. But to my mind at least it appears that Dr. Wallace has fully established his first thesis on scientific grounds. Life as it exists upon this globe could only have been evolved under the circumstances which have actually evolved it, and it is gravely improbable that all those circumstances have existed and have followed upon each other accurately in the same order in other worlds. That is the purely scientific aspect of the case; but the reflection will intrude itself that in the Divine Scheme of Things it may have been so ordered that those very processes of evolution which have produced mankind itself may have repeated themselves countless times, may even now be reproducing themselves in countless instances, or may even now in the intricate wanderings of the universe be preparing to repeat themselves with a practical unfailing accuracy.

It is now many years since I opened the pages of Paine's "Age of Reason," but, if I remember rightly, one of his arguments against the doctrine of the Redemption was based upon the supposition that most of the planets were inhabited, that a scheme of redemption could not logically be supposed to be confined to one race of creatures only, and that its fulfilment would occupy eternity. The idea of a plurality of habitable worlds has sometimes been assailed before to-day, but the question has never before been approached in so scientific a spirit as by Dr. Wallace. Yet to many thoughtful minds the criticism of Sir Oliver Lodge will not appear to be so wholly beside the mark as the author of "Man's Place in the Universe" appears to think it. He admits without reserve "the delicate planetary adjustments necessary for the support of terrestrial human life," and in this admission he acknowledges the whole force of Dr.

Wallace's argument for all it is worth, but he points out that a similarly delicate planetary adjustment may quite conceivably exist elsewhere. "To suppose," he writes, "that of all the myriads of solid bodies in space this particular lump of matter is the only one inhabited by intelligent beings seems to me—if with all due respect to so great a man I may so express it—absurd." Dr. Wallace has triumphantly established the necessity for such "a delicate planetary adjustment" as he describes as a prelude to the existence of life, but it is beyond the power of man to declare that it has never existed or does not now exist elsewhere. On that side lies the realm of pure conjecture. The man whose reason disposes him to believe in a conscious direction of the universe will simply say "If God has willed it so, it is so." This is one of the many impenetrable mysteries with which we are surrounded. With the means at our disposal we cannot solve it. We can make guesses at probabilities only.

#### DIMINISHING PROBABILITY OF EARTH- QUAKES IN ENGLAND.

THE phenomenon of a slight shaking of the earth in the English Midlands is not altogether novel. I remember one case in my own childhood, and there has been at least one occurrence of the kind between that and the most recent shock. The probabilities are very strongly in favour of the belief that there is no real danger associated with these phenomena. Coal-miners working far below the surface of the earth are more familiar with these slight demonstrations than the common run of men. I remember

that when what was technically known as "the Great South Staffordshire fault" was circumvented, and the existence of a new stretch of coalfields was demonstrated beyond it, I joined a party which visited one of the deepest of the newly-opened mines. One member of the party was a lady, and she, sitting with the rest of us in a sort of little waiting-room which was hewn out of the solid coal, was hugely terrified by a great booming noise which arose overhead, and which was followed by a faint tremor of the ground beneath us. The lady in much agitation cried out to know what was happening, and the gentlemen in coaly flannels, who had us in temporary charge, replied, "That was a boomp, ma'am," with a *sang-froid* so complete that the lady's fears were immediately assuaged.

What the miner spoke of as a bump would be to him a matter of almost constant familiarity, though the chances are that he would have but little knowledge of its meaning. A glance at a geological map for almost any quarter of the globe reveals the fact that the surface of the earth is constructed in laminæ, one deposit lying upon another like cards in a pack. The fault of the simile lies in the fact that the mind barely conceives a pack big enough to express the case. There are thousands upon thousands of layers in the laminated rocks even when they possess a natural cohesion of their own, and where, as often happens, the successive aqueous deposits of the ages differ each from other in composition and in grain, there is an obvious tendency to fall away at the least relaxation of the supporting forces from below. In that lengthy process of cooling from its early condition of fluent heat through which our earth has passed occasional gaps between stratum and stratum have

been created, and it is the sudden subsidence of an upper weight which produces those slight and comparatively harmless phenomena which very occasionally occur in England. A stratum of limestone or ironstone often runs through the centre of a series of shales, and the softer and lighter material having given way beneath it the girder built by Nature will resist pressure from above until the last instant, and will then break away and fall, if for no more than an inch or two, and may or may not communicate a shock discernible at the surface of the earth, although its fall is clearly audible to those who are working underneath.

In the case of the wilder sort of volcanic agency the probabilities appear to be that in the cooling process, to which allusion has already been made, huge bubbles have been left within the outer crust of the earth, and that the walls and roof of these great caves on sudden subsidence have liquefied through the heat generated by their own pressure, and, having encountered subterranean water deposits, have generated steam and resulted in explosion. It is almost time that the old seismological theories which were held by men of such high accomplishment as the late Professor Geikie, and are still formulated by the Astronomer Royal for Ireland, should be abandoned. The idea that volcanic action is due to the existence of a central fire is no longer tenable. The harmless shocks of earthquake which are now and then experienced even in our own country, and the cataclysmic volcanic terrors of Krakatoa and La Souffrière are in all probability alike due to a final adjustment of the mere epidermis of the earth to its own solid body, and it is quite reasonable to suppose that no volcano plants its fiery roots deeper, perhaps, than

some twenty or thirty miles. There is no higher authority on elasticities than Lord Kelvin, and he long since set forth a calculation (which, so far as I know, has never been disputed by any person of authority) with respect to the rigidity of the earth. Accepting for the purposes of his argument the suggestion that an internal globe of fire exists within the earth, he demonstrated that an outer crust of the rigidity of steel and of a thickness of five hundred miles would be as easily moulded by the gravitational "pull" of the sun and moon as a hollow ball of india-rubber is moulded by the hand. Assuming the existence of an internal fire, it must be at least some two thousand miles beneath our feet; a fervent core of some four thousand miles in diameter at the outside.

The point for which I am striving is not recognised by the authorities on seismology, and it is, of course, a daring thing for a layman to have ideas on so wide and difficult a question. But Lord Kelvin's calculations as to the state of rigidity actually necessary to what we know of the existing conditions of our planet, afford the theory an immense support. The probabilities are that there is no internal fire at all in the sense in which it is commonly imagined, and that below a surface not exceeding fifty miles the earth is absolutely solid, compact, and cold. The commonly accepted idea is, of course, that the contractile forces of the cooling earth-crust have created and maintained a condition of liquid heat in its interior. But one has only to ask what would necessarily happen if this theory were true. The contractile forces are in constant action to this very day, and such a thing as an inert volcano is hardly conceivable upon the hypothesis supposed.

In the most recent sphere of volcanic activity on a large and splendid scale, it will be observed that enormous tracts of land appear to have fallen away from the neighbourhood of the islands still remaining. From Cuba to Matamoras there is now a clear space of sea in the Gulf of Mexico, but there is little doubt that at one time the Greater Antilles and the Windward and West Indian groups were in surface association with the mainland. The disruption has taken place in the course of the process by which our earth has filled in some of its later surface crevices. From this point of view it would appear that the occurrence of any sort of volcanic phenomena reduces the probability of their repetition. This is manifestly true only in relation to the distant future, for one seismic disturbance on a large scale might very well serve to break up a whole series of those earth bubbles, on the existence of which we count, according to this theory, for the explanation of severe earthquakes and volcanic eruption. It is, as it were, the final act in a drama which has been prolonged for centuries beyond our computation. The last holes in the earth-crust are filling in, and it will not be until the latest subterranean cavern has yielded to the gravitational and tangential forces above and about it that the earth will enjoy a complete immunity from this form of disaster.

In our own country there is every reason to believe that the faint shocks which are from time to time experienced are due mainly, if not entirely, to the fact that an occasional fissure between the various laminations of rock are being filled in by the process of contraction. There is no reason, however, why these small portents should be entirely divorced from the action of those larger agencies which are still operating

in the Gulf of Mexico. Rigid as the earth's crust is proved to be, it has, of course, a certain degree of elasticity of its own. It is not easy to conceive of anything much less elastic than a diamond, but, as a matter of mere chemical fact, there is barely a limit to its expansive power. A steel bridge is perceptibly longer in summer than in winter, and a careful measurement of the telegraph wires and railway lines of the world would certainly indicate a difference of many miles in length as between one season and another. There is, in short, no such possibility as an absolute and scientific rigidity.

### THE FUTURE LANGUAGE OF THE WORLD.

THAT question of the conflict of languages which is raised in Mr. Wells's "Anticipations" is not merely speculative. The ingenious author supposes that something of a struggle for supremacy may take place between the French and English tongues, and to his mind it is not inconceivable that in the long run French may be more generally spoken than English. The main argument on which he bases this assumption is that the literary output of France is richer than that of England, and that it is distinguished by a finer intellectual activity. Since the world in the main is eager for new thought and for discovery of all sorts, this fact—if a fact it be—will set the world to study French literature and to neglect English. I think I shall be able to show by and by that the dominance of a language does not greatly depend upon its literature, and in the meantime I am not particularly disposed to accept any assumption that the literary wares which modern France has to offer

are superior to those of modern England. Mr. Wells avers, with an almost startling emphasis, that we have in this country no public for serious work. "There is neither honour nor reward," he writes—"there is not even food or shelter—for the Englishman or American who devotes a year or so of his life to the adequate treatment of any spacious question."

It seems to me that this proclamation is much too sweeping—so much too sweeping that it approaches the outline of the absurd. It is very certain that the way is not made easy for the thinker who has a serious truth in his mind, and who essays to teach it whilst he is backed up by no advantages of private fortune. It is a matter of common knowledge that Mr. Herbert Spencer's monumental labours have yielded the poorest pecuniary results, and I opine that they would have been no more fortunate in that respect in any other country or at any other time. Where every page of a book represents the brain-sweat of a week, and when the book as a whole can appeal only to the truly studious mind, the writing of it will not produce an adequate monetary reward. It has never done so anywhere. It is safe to believe that it never will. But to say that there is no honour for it is surely to go beyond the truth. "There is not even food or shelter" for the man who devotes himself entirely to work of any kind which yields no immediate remuneration—not in brilliant France or studious Germany, or in any corner of the world so ever. There is no valid reason why there should be.

There is very little reward in pounds and pence for original thinking or for scholarly research, but there is honour in plenty when the work is done, and England and America are no more reluctant to bestow it than are other nations. If literary France owns any supre-

macy over literary England at this moment it is certainly not because she makes it easier for a poor man to pursue any line of original and exhaustive thought. One admits, of course, a part of Mr. Wells's indictment against the output of the contemporary English Press. Nine-tenths of it is contemptible and fifty per cent. is sunk out of sight of contempt. And this, I venture to say, is true also of the "literary" activities of France and of Germany. Of the scores of thousands of books which swarm from the publishing houses of the four great printing and publishing countries in a year not one per cent.—nay, barely one per thousand—will survive a whole generation.

We suffer from a flux of printed matter everywhere. The mass of the world's printed stuff is helpless and hopeless rubbish, but the mass is not issued solely from London and New York. The German novel can rival in inanity anything the world has seen, and the Frenchman is not far behind when once you have gauged him, and the nostalgia of the gutter has ceased to be a piquant thing. But the "intellectual activity" of Paris, as compared with the intellectual sluggishness of London, may not unfairly be determined by a comparison between the journals, the reviews, and the magazines of the two capitals. I should say roughly that the intellectual activity of France as displayed in the desire to realise the world of action and of thought outside its own borders—and as expressed in the concrete forms which reveal that desire and minister to it—is not one-twentieth part that of England. I will make it a matter of capital invested, or of the weight of paper issued, or of the number of intelligences employed. And having offered that little challenge, I will make it a matter of value to every kind of human

interest, whether of the intellect or the pocket. This intellectually active Paris is sunk in an isolated and ignorant barbarism in comparison with London and New York, or, for the matter of that, in comparison with the dweller in any English or American hamlet.

One thing I concede ungrudgingly. The brainless person who writes in French is much less shocking than the brainless person who writes in English, because, as a rule, he has some sense of responsibility towards his native language. He is a better craftsman, a better stylist. Yet it is not a difficult thing for a Frenchman of average culture to write good French. The language is more scientifically constructed than our own, and only ignorance of the grosser kind can easily go wrong in the use of it. One's difficulty is to say within limits so narrow as these all that one has to say. But an Englishman's appreciation of French literary art will always be diverted more or less from the estimate of the thought conveyed to the mind towards the manner of its carriage; and a pretty handling of a very ancient bundle of ideas will enlist him sooner than the clumsy hold on a much more valuable and original parcel. But I am not personally inclined to bow to the superior intellectual activity of a capital which owns but one first-class "Review" and not one solitary "organ of intelligence" which in its universality of gathered information can rival a local daily sheet in any of our provincial cities.

So far, then, the issue stands thus. The French tongue may eclipse the use of the English, because its literature is the more inviting of the two. Its literature is the more inviting because its thought is freer and more cosmopolitan, and because serious, sound philosophic research is more encouraged. I con-

tent myself with a round denial of every postulate here offered. I am not prepared to compare the French best with the Anglo-Saxon worst. We are not to be sampled by our rubbish-heap whilst Paris displays the pick of her basket. But we may ask whether France can show us a rival to Spencer in creative thought, or a master to Meredith in fiction, or a master to Pinero in comedy. In the mere matter of our daily Press, our weekly, monthly, and quarterly reviews of art, letters, politics, and the whole bag of things which interest the world at large, we put our neighbour to shame ; and I do not know of any department of thought and energy in which we lag behind her. She has excelled us out and out in music, but her sole triumph has been gained in that one arena in a hundred.

And now to move to another ground, where the mere impulses of Chauvinism will have less force. Let us first of all lay hold of one primary fact of vital importance. Every student of philology—even the shallowest—knows that languages adequate to all the needs of men have had their day and died. Sir William Jones said of the Sanskrit that it is “a language of wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, and more copious than the Latin.” Yet it is extinct as a medium for the interchange of thought, and it must be at once conceded that it did not perish because of any inherent feebleness in itself. Greek and Latin have shared its fate, though they also were highly-perfected instruments of intercourse. We labour to-day in the vast quarries of their literatures. We rank the products of their writers amongst the shining splendours of human achievement. And not only so. The scholars of the world have pored delightfully over the technical

excellence of the languages in which the classic authors worked. They have lauded them for their strength, and for their delicacy, for their amplitude, and their minuteness. We may take it as an absolute certainty that there was nothing an Athenian could desire to say which he could not say in Greek as fully, truly, and tersely as it could be said in any modern tongue. The same thing was true of the Roman and the Latin. If the Sanskrit were better than either it must have been a language for the gods. Yet all three are dead. And why ?

You observe that we must disabuse ourselves at the beginning of any idea that the life of a language depends finally upon its adaptability to human needs. Adaptable to human needs it must be, obviously, but we see that not even a perfect adaptability can save it from decay. The establishment of this initial fact excuses me from any necessity for an examination into the comparative merits of French and English. A language does not live because of its own intrinsic merits, for the rich Sanskrit was buried under a thousand poverty-stricken jargons, and for centuries after Latin ceased to be a living tongue there was not one spoken language in the world which was not, by comparison, barbarous. It is therefore no business of ours, in this discussion, to ask which of two competitors for universal favour has the finer quality —which is the more accurate, the more descriptive, the more copious. The history of the human race has proved that the dominant tongue of the world is that of its dominant people. When a nation ceases to migrate and to subdue, when it fails to hold its own in war and commerce, its language ceases to be spoken, or shrinks into narrower limits. This is a fact which has renewed itself in the world's history

times without number, and there is not an instance to the contrary.

If we could imagine that the whole map of the world was rearranged, and that either France or England were eliminated from it, we could not conceive that the immortality of Shakespeare or Molière would be in the least degree imperilled by the change. The great poets and satirists and historians, the great pioneers of thought in general, are so numerous in either country, and are in themselves so very great, that they will command the affection and awaken the delight of scholars in ages of which we cannot even dream, and should either French or English become in the course of the centuries a dead language, it would certainly survive and shine amongst the classic tongues. A literature of the supreme sort, like that of Greece, of Italy, of France, or of England, will ensure the preservation of the tongue in which it is written, but only in a fossil form. It is the smallest of the factors in the extension of the use of a living language. Of the Englishmen who learn French to enjoy its literature, or of Frenchmen who learn English with a similar purpose, there are necessarily few. The two powers meet in the jostling war of the markets, in the struggle for supremacy in colonisation, in the building and unmaking of empire, in the subjugation and after-civilisation of inferior races. The one way in which the speech of any one race may be made to spread beyond that of another is to make a knowledge of it practically essential to success in the common enterprises of life. The English-speaking peoples are doing this, and the French are not doing it. Either French or English would satisfy the literary and conversational needs of mankind to admiration. Each is, in its own fashion, an instrument perfect for

its purpose. Each has already produced a practically eternal library. But a live supremacy can only be achieved by the champions who dare to take the field at large. England took up the white man's burden many years ago, and has borne it with little flinching, out of the mere exuberance of the national character. France has barely set a little finger to the task to which we have bent our shoulders.

It is an odd thing, when one comes to think of it, that we English, to whom "Home, Sweet Home" is the dearest of proverbs, should be the most wandering people under heaven, and that the French, who haven't even a name for that precious symbol, should be, after all, the most domestic. But on that curious fact the solution of the language problem will have to depend in the long run. We have gone afield into North America, and have peopled, more or less, seven millions of square miles there. We have another three and a half millions of square miles in Australasia, and in all it may be reckoned that the speakers of all European languages the world over do not count one in two as compared with our own. That the French idiom should supersede the English in America seems something of a dream. That it should oust us in India and China is also something of a dream.

In the battle of the tongues there are really two factors—one of which I have so far neglected. The first and much the more effective is occupation. The next is the choice between complexity and simplicity. England, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and some inferior States have adopted the brief alphabet of Greece and Rome and a legible character. Germany can print its ideas in French or English type, if it will; but it puts itself out of the running by an obstinate adhesion to a form of letter which ought

to have been extinct long ago. The Slavs, who might otherwise come into the contest any day, are debarred by a clumsy and redundant alphabet and a character more archaic than that of Athens. The Chinese, who, in the visions of Mr. Wells, are at least possible adversaries, have an alphabet of nearly fifty thousand characters. A terse alphabet, a wide vocabulary, a legible script—these are the first essentials. These make the edge and the butt of the wedge which is to cleave your world, but the driving force is in the hammer, and the hammer is wielded best by the strongest man. Where everything else is equal, the winner is the strongest and most persistent.

### THE CHURCH'S DUTIES AND DETRACTORS.

PERHAPS the best way of arriving at a solution of the question as to why men do not go to church will be, first of all, to reverse it, and to ask why they do. There seem to be five operative reasons, which may be very briefly stated. Men go to church—I. Because they are Christians who remember the apostolic exhortation—"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together"; 2. Because it is a reputable thing to do; 3. Because it is social; 4. Because of an ornate service and fine music; 5. Because of the presence of a great orator.

Now, in exhausting the reasons for going, one appears to have exhausted the reasons for not going. When Carlyle went to hear poor Irving preach, after the gift of tongues had done its fatal worst with the late idol of fashionable London, he reported that you might have fired a musket bullet in the church in almost

any direction without danger to human life. It is very certain that in such of our churches as are most crowded you might discharge a rifle where you would with a very remote likelihood of putting a Christian's life in peril. There are very few real Christians. There were never very many. When we meet one nowadays we sometimes appoint a commission *de lunatico inquirendo*. Of course there are thousands and thousands of pious people who are inspired by faith to live beautiful and blameless lives, and these are Christians for the purposes of this inquiry—not real Christians, but Christians, as it were, within the meaning of the Act. Some of these go to public worship as a delight, and all of them go as a duty. These, taking them at large, are amongst the noblest elements of our civilisation, but proportionally they are a small party, even amongst that minority which goes to church at all.

There is a sense in which Christianity is the most potent and penetrative force which human history records. There is a sense in which it has been discarded by its followers. But it will be seen that it is powerfully at work in the practical life of great masses of people who are far removed from any acceptance of its dogma. Christian principle is active in many pure, honourable, dignified, and benevolent lives from which all conception of Christian faith is absent. The mass of law-abiding and respectable citizens is virtually agnostic. Where its agnosticism is not reasoned out, it is habitual and unconcerned. The orderly, honest, duty-doing people who never think about religion one way or the other form by far the largest class in the whole community. The first partial answer to the question we are considering is that men do not go to church because they do not

believe or feel interested in the doctrines taught there. Since a very largely preponderant proportion of the people who live without faith have never examined the Church pretensions for themselves, it is evident that there is a wide and virgin field to work in.

I have admitted, in the terms in which I have ventured to express the question, that conventionalism and sociality have their share in taking to church such men as habitually go there at all. These are probably the least hopeful of all subjects from the true Churchman's point of view. They have conventionalised and demagnetised the most tremendous appeal which any society can offer to mankind—the salvation of the individual soul. They have in the completest manner resigned all personal interest in that problem. They are worldlings pure and simple, and the fact that they constitute a majority amongst church-goers is of itself an object-lesson. The average law-abiding man who stays away knows himself to the full as devout and spiritually-minded as the average man who goes. It is here, perhaps, in the fact of the presence of great numbers of the patently insincere, that the Church suffers its cruellest check. A handful of enthusiasts may carry almost anything.

The technical approval of a cold and formal crowd of respectables will stifle any passion for humanity. Any creed which enlists an overwhelming numerical majority of dullards is potentially done for. Because it is "good form" with the greater number of its votaries the Church is moribund. The ancient command was to "go into the highways and the byways and *compel* them to come in." Snooks, who prospers in the City, and who goes to church for the most worldly of reasons, keeps clear of all schemes for the violent evangelisation of the masses. The banner

of " blood and fire " which is borne by the Salvationists is obviously not for his carrying. To go to church is good form. To be convinced about its doctrines and to urge them emotionally upon a perishing world is all very well, no doubt, for the people who have no social reputation to consider. And thus the Church is smothered by the fact that an attendance on her services has been assumed to convey a kind of social *cachet*. It secures the acquiescence of a great number of people who are indifferent to its beliefs and unsympathetic to its best purposes. One knows that the Church, to be on a level with its own professions, should be at passionate war with the world, the flesh, and the devil. But it is compelled to keep step with the lukewarm and the lagging. An employment of strenuous energy would be thought vulgar.

Men will go to church for the sake of a beautiful and stimulating service, but even in those cases where this is made an object it is not often pursued intelligently. I am far from any desire to speak irreverently, or to give offence, but the man who publicly intones the Church service is to all intents and purposes a public performer, and, although I am by no means a regular church-goer, I have assisted at many exhibitions of gross incompetence, where the ear has been wounded by groping and impossible intervals, where the meaning of the beautiful words recited has been murderously maligned or totally obscured, where a man with no more intelligence for elocution than a goat, and no more voice than a raven, and no more apparent reverence than a coster displays in the hawking of his wares, has literally grated on every nerve of mind and body. The general run of church elocution is poor indeed, but when it grows ambitious and attempts, without voice, practice, or instruction, to wed itself

to music it is often a burlesque, and, if it were not for the sacred associations which protect it even whilst they are degraded by it, would be most deservedly hissed for the insolent incompetence it truly is. The spirit of worship itself cannot sanctify so absurd a travesty of art. A clergyman should study the business of voice-production. We do not ask for histrionics in the pulpit, or expect that every cleric should have the voice and style of Mr. Lewis Waller ; but no man should be allowed to read the Lessons or the Litanies until he has secured a pass from a competent Board of Examiners, and the unqualified person who attempts to intone the service should be sternly and immediately inhibited by his Bishop.

Then everybody knows that no church stands empty which boasts a really competent preacher. The Church has had orators of every kind—the logical, the emotional, the convincing, the hortatory. It has even had its humorists. No one of these with a real message to mankind and a real power in its delivery has ever wanted hearers. But it needs no courage to declare that the average sermon is a sore infliction to the man of average thought and culture. It has no pretence to any flavour of literature or learning. It is hatched without any heat or thought and delivered without unction. It reveals no spiritual experience, and it touches none of the salient facts of active life. It is, in short, a boredom complete and unadorned. And you have but to figure to yourself for an instant the functions and the possibilities of the true preacher to see how horribly ill the Church provides for us in this respect. Unless a man does veritably believe in the deep core and soul of him that he has a message to deliver to a sinful mankind which is in real danger of eternal loss he has no business in the pulpit. The

Creed of the Church is that Christ died that men believing upon Him should enter into life everlasting, and that a second death awaits the impenitent and the spiritual sloven who wastes his spiritual estate. And with such a motive and a cue for passion as man never had elsewhere in the world, the common sermonist peaks like John-a-Dreams, unpregnant of any earthly or heavenly cause, not talking like a dying man to dying men, but like a highly respectable automaton to a set of highly respectable automata. Bleat, bleat, bleat, on thy spirit wastes, O Sunday curate, and I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me. On second thoughts I wish nothing of the kind. Bleat, my poor friend, and earn a part of your most exiguous income. Me, at least, you shall not bleat at. Why should I deliberately import a fruitless anger into my too-rare devotions? If any living creature drivelled your harrowing common-places at me in a club smoking-room, I would kill him if I could not otherwise escape or silence him.

Let us come to honest dealing. The question with most of us is not why do not men in general go to church, but why don't *I* go? Hail, rain, or shine, week in, week out, for a good many years I walked ten miles once a-Sunday—five miles out and five miles home—to sit at the feet of the man who was later on the first journalistic chief under whom I served—George Dawson, who, in the days of my youth, preached at the Church of the Saviour in Birmingham. There was a man who knew how to talk to men. For thousands all over Great Britain he was a Moses in the Wilderness. For my own part, I never listened to him without coming into contact with some new thought, or being set upon some new line of reading. He vivified every mental and spiritual impulse. He had

book-wisdom and worldly-wisdom, and that wisdom of the soul which is the growth of a true reverence. It is something like thirty years since I last heard his voice or held him by the hand, and here am I now hailing him across that gulf of earthly time as my best guide and friend, the apostle of those young and ardent days in which my life's work was given me to do. Great is the spoken word of man where the sincere soul and the transparent will to be of service shine behind it, and incredibly mean is the spoken word of man when it sounds for its own sound's sake alone. Personally, I stay away from church because I love good music and good elocution and sound talk, and because bad music and bad elocution and silly twaddle about great and sacred things hurt and irritate me. And I say let the Church look to these things lest she perish.

I revere the Church of England, with its bead-roll of great names, its saints and martyrs, its scholars and its orators, its Litanies of beauty—deformed by too much repetition as they are—its numberless bequests of great architectural art and great music. But its venerable Bede and its judicious Hooker, and its cloistered beauties of Peterborough and York and Westminster, and its façades of Lichfield and Ely do not atone to the modern mind for the somnolence of the modern Church. The modern Church neglects many of the things which once made her valuable, and if she is neglected, as the whole trend of the correspondence which has been poured out of recent days would seem to indicate, in spite of the responsibilities which accompany her great power and wealth, she has herself alone to blame. First of all if there is any real desire that the ordinary Church service should flourish, let us do away with the intoning of

those who cannot intone and the preaching of those who cannot preach.

Why should there be not once more established, for example, an order of preaching friars ? I would go gladly to hear a man who had made one theme his own, who knows and can teach me absolutely whatever can be known about this or that exegesis, this or that bit of Church history, or this or that of any form of social life or science. The request for a friar is, of course, purely figurative ; but the establishment of an order of instructed men who should be competent to instruct is surely not outside the powers of a community so wealthy as the English Church. The man who can tell me everything about anything is the man I want to meet, and the man who can tell me nothing about anything is the man I want to avoid, and most especially desire to avoid when he has a conventional right to talk to me for five and thirty minutes at a stretch.

### THE NEW THEOLOGY.\*

A number of those who have taken part in the controversy which is raging in newspapers and pulpits all over the country with respect to Mr. R. J. Campbell's "New Theology" insist that the only question to be decided may be posed in the words, "What is Christianity?" To furnish an answer to this question which might be regarded as satisfactory to the general body of professing Christians is, of course, an absolute impossibility. Apart from the differences of opinion and belief which have separated the

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\* Written in January, 1907.

Anglican and the Roman Churches and the greater of the nonconforming bodies—the Wesleyans, the Baptists, and the Congregationalists—there are scores upon scores of variations held and expressed by Adventists, Alethians, and Apostolics; by Baptised Believers and followers of Joanna Southcott; by the Children of God, the Christian Eliasites, and the Christian Israelites; by the Ecclesia of the Messiah, the Glassites and the Glazebrook Army; by the Holiness Army and the Inghamites, the Unitarians and the Unitarian Baptists, the Nazarenes, the Christadelphians, the Peculiar People, and a host of others. It is very evident that no definition can be found which will serve for all these, and it happens constantly that even in the same body there are wide divergences. The question is one which each must answer for himself; but the point at issue between Mr. Campbell and his critics is really one of altogether another nature.

Mr. Campbell is a minister of the Congregational Church, and is by virtue of his position supposed to be an advocate of that modified Calvinism which has been gradually educed from the Westminster Confession. It needs not to be said that he has an entire right to follow his conscience, but the question is how far he has a right to avail himself of the mechanism at his disposal in order to spread doctrines which are openly and even violently opposed to the intentions of those by whom that mechanism was created. I read that Mr. Campbell in an address recently delivered at Brighton denounced the “busy-bodies” who have called upon him to resign his pastorate, and proclaimed that he still possesses the confidence of his congregation. But that again is not the point. Mr. Campbell’s flock, like Mr.

Campbell himself, occupies a fiduciary position, and whilst its members are in agreement with doctrines which would have been regarded as heretical and damnable by the founders of their trust, they place themselves, to say the least of it, in a questionable attitude when they continue to enjoy its advantages. Until the terms of the trust are legally abrogated they demand imperatively to be obeyed, and this is by no means to deny the principle of intellectual and spiritual freedom by which the new theologians set such righteous store. It is simply to affirm that it is not just or honourable to employ the means which were intended for one distinct purpose in order to further another purpose which is flatly opposed to it.

It has come about in the course of time that some of the stricter tenets expressed in the Westminster Confession have fallen into general discredit. Perhaps the late Charles Spurgeon was the last man of any real eminence who held the stern old Calvinistic faith in its purity, and the process of relaxation from it has been so gradual, and practically so universal, that it would have been a difficult thing at any given moment in the last fifty years to indicate a profound and fundamental change. It was rather by the omission to enforce certain points of doctrine than by any open protest against them that the change was brought about. The belief that "by the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others pre-ordained to everlasting death" has not been generally held and enforced for many years, but it has none the less been allowed to remain as one of the tenets under which the pastor of the City Temple has accepted the trust reposed in him. In the frankest denunciation of this horrible and revolting creed any minister of

the Christian Faith now meets with general approval, and yet he debars himself from the *right* to denounce it, so long as he holds his ministry on the expressed condition that he shall teach it. There is barely a heresy hunter in England who would desire to impeach Mr. Campbell on this ground, and if we can imagine any fanatically-minded person taking action, we can realise for ourselves the ridicule with which he would be received.

But in regard to the main issue on which Mr. Campbell has spoken, the Westminster Confession still expresses the faith of the great body of Congregationalists. "The Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, being very and eternal God, did take upon Him man's nature . . . so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one Person." That is still the belief of the overwhelming majority of those who profess and call themselves Christians, and, even if it were not so, it is the belief which Mr. Campbell is bound to maintain by the conditions under which he holds his appointment. The position is really one of the extremest simplicity, and it has nothing whatever to do with the rightness or wrongness of any theological doctrine whatsoever. The terms of the trust under which the City Temple is held bind its pastor to maintain the belief that Jesus of Nazareth is in the special, peculiar, and plain meaning of the words the only begotten Son of God, and this is a postulate which Mr. Campbell denies. It is open to him to express his denial in any one of a thousand places, by voice or pen, but he has no right to his denial and to the pastorate of the City Temple at the same time.

The *Daily Telegraph* indicates a very real danger

to Congregationalism if the upholders of the "re-stated Theology" should continue their claim to retain their old rights whilst professing their new opinions. "What happened in Scotland may be repeated here." In the struggle between the Free Kirk and the Wee Kirk a minority which was as inferior in learning and intelligence as in numbers clung to the old dogmas which the Church was established to teach, and they were held to be the legal owners of the Church's possessions. If a similar case were tried in respect of the City Temple there can be no doubt that the verdict of the Courts would go in the same direction. It could not possibly be decided by the comparative merits of the New Theology and the Westminster Confession. The only question which could be raised would be as to whether the present occupants of the edifice are acting in obedience to the trust under which they enjoy the use of it, and to that question there could be one answer only. There are two ways of adjusting the difficulty. One is to secure such an alteration in the terms of the trust as shall legalise the position of Mr. Campbell and his deacons, and the other is to establish a communion of their own, in which no dead hand can be stretched out to obstruct the progress of that which they believe to be the truth. One or other of these two courses they must take unless they are prepared to run the risk of a legal action which could not fail to go against them, whilst in its progress it would be sure to evoke all manner of ill-will.

In any case, it would appear that some controversial bitterness is unavoidable, and Mr. Campbell has already done himself a very serious wrong in denouncing those outside his own congregation who have called upon him to resign. The fact that his

officers and people are with him is for him personally a very satisfactory and gratifying thing, but it rather supplies a reason why he should resign than it shows him to be right in maintaining so anomalous a position as that which he at present holds. Should he elect to retire he would carry his congregation with him, and he would secure the approval of great numbers of those who are at present opposed to him, as much on the question of consistency as on any point of theology. The adhesion of his people gives him a guarantee that he would suffer no diminution of influence. And impossible as it is to answer with authority the question "What is Christianity?" it is perfectly easy to find an authoritative response to the inquiry "What is Congregationalism?" Mr. Campbell maintains that he is still a Christian, but he cannot by any stretch of terms continue to define himself a Congregationalist.

The creed of the Independents—into which I myself was born, and in whose tenets I was bred—has for its vital centre that belief in the Special Sonship of Christ which Mr. Campbell repudiates. From that belief it has never wavered for an instant, and whatever other sort of Christian he may be, Mr. Campbell ceased to be a Congregationalist Christian at the moment when he first allowed any modification of the idea of the Godhead of Christ to take root in his mind. As to the truth of that proposition there can be no dispute, and it certainly makes it difficult to understand how he reconciles himself to his continuance in a Congregational pastorate.

The position is by no means a new one. Many men of more or less eminence have found themselves forced to abandon the hard-and-fast lines of thought in which they have been bred, and, having severed

themselves formally from a creed with which they have lost sympathy, have carried their congregations with them. A notable example was that of my old journalistic chief George Dawson, who in the earlier part of his career held the pulpit of a Baptist church in Birmingham. He grew out of his first beliefs, and he preached so latitudinarian a doctrine that he shocked the elders and more orthodox professors of the Baptist creed, precisely as Mr. Campbell has shocked the more orthodox professors of Congregationalism. But when he withdrew from his cure he took away with him the great majority of his hearers, and they built for him the Church of the Saviour, where he preached for many years, and whence he exercised a far larger and more liberalising influence than he could have done had he continued in his old position. Before George Dawson died he had earned such a reputation for courage and intellectual honesty that no man of his time enjoyed a greater share of public esteem. And that esteem was certainly not more marked amongst his fellow-deserters from the Baptist creed than it was amongst members of other communions and men of no communion at all. It may be said with confidence that his sphere of influence was enormously widened by the fact of his secession. Mr. Campbell must judge for himself in respect to his own action, but he would strengthen his own case by a recognition of the vital nature of the differences which exist between himself and the orthodox Congregationalist.

I have been found fault with for having asserted my belief that the world is bound onward and upward under an intelligent guidance, and that the profoundest spiritual insight yet given to man is expressed in the teachings of the Founder of the Christian Faith,

whilst I also hold that the world would have been nearer to the spirit in which He taught if His message had not been obscured by the Pauline commentary on it. This is described as "a self-stultifying contradiction," my critic's point being "if the profoundest spiritual insight were given to Christ by or through an intelligent guidance then Saul of Tarsus and others were given by or through the same intelligent guidance their shallow obstructive blindness in order to oppose intelligent guidance and nullify Christ's spiritual insight." The writer goes on to affirm that "Atheism is the *only* philosophy which human reason can expound and defend without being involved in contradictions." There is no contradiction to be found in the passage cited. The fact that great truths are often imperfectly understood is known to all of us, and it has nothing whatever to do with the question as to whether the world is or is not under an intelligent guidance. Nor is the profundity of Christ's spiritual insight at all affected by the assumption that Paul's gloss upon His teaching introduced some extraneous and confusing matter into it. Nor would even the assumption that Christ's teaching was directly inspired imply that Paul was divinely inspired to confuse it. The belief that the world is under an intelligent guidance does not involve the manifest absurdity that everything said and done in it is directly subject to that guidance, and that all men's thoughts and actions result from a direct inspiration. It involves the idea that the universe is being conducted according to a plan, and there are a thousand indications discernible by the rational mind which go to support that conclusion.

## THE TEACHING IN OUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

THERE appeared in the newspapers recently the story of a mother's application to one of our metropolitan magistrates. Her boy, whom she described as being "as big as a man," had been unable to pass the regulation Board school standard, and was being detained at his studies in consequence. He was eager to get to work, and the wages he could earn would be of great service to the family. Being asked if he were short-witted, she answered that he was "a little backward," but no more. The application was refused. The youthful Samson has gone back to his slate and his spelling-book, and it may be presumed that he will prosper at them in the future just as much as he has prospered at them in the past. It is only in Law that a case can be held to be established by a single instance, but whilst it will not do to base an attack on our educational system on so limited a ground as this, the story may serve its turn as an illustration. Slack-witted young Samson will be sixteen years of age in May next, and then the School Board will have to let him go. Meanwhile, having definitely established the fact that Samson can't learn and won't learn, and is not anyhow to be made to learn, a paternal Legislature thoughtfully decides that he shall not be allowed to do anything else but learn. A boy, who is just commonplace dull and no more, can be kept at the educational grindstone until he is fourteen years of age, or until

he has satisfied the standard requirements of his examiners. A boy who is doomed by nature never to satisfy any standard requirements whatsoever in this direction can be kept at it until he reaches his sixteenth birthday. It does not seem brilliantly wise on the face of it to enact that just because there is one particular thing a human being cannot do he shall be debarred from doing anything else, however necessary or useful it may be, and shall be made to sit down for wasted month on month before the impossible.

In point of fact, so far as slack-witted young Samson is concerned, the whole enginery of the Elementary Education Act appears to be devised for his destruction and undoing, until the fluxion of time sets him free next May. There are many thousands of more or less similar cases scattered up and down the country, and the sorely-tried rate-payer is paying for them and is getting no more value for his money than if he threw it into the sea. But I have not taken this particular grievance for its own sake. It affords a text under which the whole question of our national scheme of compulsory education may be inquired into. Whilst our curious friends the passive resisters have been raising Cain on microscopic points of conscience, and Progressives and Moderates have been putting heart and soul into election work, it does not seem to have occurred to many people to ask whether the whole game, as we are playing it, is worth the candle. In 1873 the rate imposed for educational purposes in London amounted to eighty-nine one-hundredths of a penny. In 1903 it amounted to fourteenpence-halfpenny and a fraction over. Whilst the cost to the ratepayer has been multiplied by fifteen or sixteen times, the average attendance has been multiplied a little over

eleven times, so that the work, such as it is, is in some measure there for the money. It is somewhat more expensively done—perhaps it is more efficiently done. The questions worth our asking are whether it is worth doing at all, and, if that be so, whether we are doing it in the most useful way. Now, in respect to our national views concerning compulsory education, I make bold to believe that we are wholly given over to error. I claim as enthusiastically as anybody the inalienable right of every child born into a civilised country to have the gates of knowledge opened to it. That has been done when the child has been taught the three R's, and beyond it no Government has a right to press at the cost of the public whose affairs it administers.

The course of instruction for scholars beyond the stage of infancy at present includes English, arithmetic, drawing, geography, and history. Everybody who knows London knows the appalling waste of time and energy and money. The study of English involves, of course, the study of grammar, and I suppose that a viler hash of a great language than that employed by the School Board pupils of London is nowhere to be found. Even a Board School boy's time is worth something ; and does anybody pretend that in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred it is not clean thrown away when it is expended in committing to memory the rules of English grammar ? The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The average Board School pupil has had his daily dose of grammar for a term of years and it has left his speech an ungrammatical brash. He knows literally and absolutely nothing of what you have been pretending to teach him for years. Take drawing. It can be taught so as to be a delight to almost any boy or girl. As a matter of fact, how

many youths and girls of Board School training can give you the most elementary sketch of the simplest object? Take geography. What sort of an idea of the formation of this globe and of the reasons for that formation—of the distribution of land and sea and plain and mountain; just the simple essence of the science, it will be observed—do you suppose you will get from any Board School pupil who is not downright abnormal? He may give you a string of towns or rivers or bays, or what not, but his knowledge is useless to him from the first, and will die out of him as soon as he leaves school. He and his teachers have been guilty of a sheer waste of time. Take history. It is taught as a little tangle of dates and names which can convey to the mind no beginning of an idea as to what the science truly means.

I foresee easily the objection to be urged to all this. If these strictures are true they are almost as true of the schools to which the middle and upper middle-classes send their children as they are of the Board Schools. It is an indictment of a system of education which may or may not be tenable, but is it more? To me it appears to be much more. The middle-class citizen who chooses to have his children crammed with unessential fact under the belief that the process is one of education pays for his own whim. The Board Schools draw upon the public funds—a thing which might be welcomed if results were approximate to effort, but which becomes downright intolerable when the result is broad fiasco, as it is in the enormous majority of cases under the present system. The fact to be recognised is that a very small percentage of boys in any station of life will be found to pay for a scholastic training. The kind of boy who will adequately reward his tutors in this way is practically

the kind of boy who, being with or without aid, will become a scholar. You have done all he wants when you have taught him to read, and have given him access to a library. You can facilitate his progress, no doubt, and no doubt it is a kindness to do it ; but if he has the root of the matter in him he will not be stayed by any common obstacle. And in like manner the average boy will have nothing to do with mere scholarship if he can help it, and will forget with all possible expedition everything he has ever had crammed into him.

Our private citizens must do as they please, but for a State-aided, State-controlled system of education there ought to be a *raison d'être* in result. Let the boy of special capacity have his chance in our Board Schools. Let him be free to travel as far as his powers will take him. But our mistake is that we act as if we believed that mere paper learning is an essential to the general happiness and well-being. In pursuit of this theory we have developed a most highly specialised class of men and women, who are positively encyclopædic in their possession of information of which they are not expected to transmit more than the merest fraction to the mass of their pupils. We have erected costly buildings by the thousand, and for their maintenance we spend money annually by the four millions in London alone. So far as the bulk of the population is concerned the result of all this cost and effort is melancholy in the extreme. Our Continuation schools may be admirably fruitful, because they are frequented voluntarily by those who are anxious to improve themselves. The system of technical education, so far as it has been adopted, is full of promise and performance. But it is in relation to the great body of our people that the bookish system

stands condemned as a complete failure. What, then, remains to be done? Obviously to abandon or modify that part of the scheme which has proved impracticable after an experience of more than thirty years, and to move with an increased activity along those lines which have been found most profitable.

It is not at all a question of class. It is a fact in human nature. The enormous majority of mankind have no use whatever for the greater part of that which we are accustomed to teach in schools. We have taken this business of the education of the proletariat upon our shoulders, and what we have to do is to turn out the best equipped and most self-helpful body of men and women possible. A good ninety per cent. of those under our charge have proved roundly that they will *not* absorb a scientific knowledge of their native tongue, that they will *not* absorb more than the most futile conceptions of geography and history, and that even what they have seemed to acquire will slip away from them like water from a duck's back before they have been a year from school. Manual dexterities cannot be so lost, and when our authorities have learned wisdom we shall see the bookish system of tuition set aside in favour of the physical and the technical, except in those cases where willing and competent pupils, gathered into special classes, are encouraged to follow the natural bent of their own minds.

### THE EDUCATION FETISH.

THE letters I have received in respect to the system of education practised in our Board Schools have for the most part been adverse to my suggestion that a

waste of time is incurred in the continued tuition of backward scholars. This is not at all to be wondered at, because they come without exception from ladies and gentlemen who are actively engaged in the work of tuition, and who are naturally unwilling to believe that their own labours are being thrown away. But I am very considerably surprised to find that as many as three-and-twenty of these educational experts write to inform me that no power exists by virtue of which any School Board pupil can be held to his studies after the age of fourteen. They are quite in error, as they may learn by consulting the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899, 62 and 63 Vict., c. 32, where the limit of age of compulsion is fixed at sixteen years. The boy of ordinary capacity is free to leave school at fourteen, irrespective of his having passed any of the standards imposed. But—I cite Clough's abstract of the Act of 1899—

"Power is given to local authorities to ascertain what children by reason of mental or physical defect are incapable of receiving proper benefit from the instruction in ordinary elementary schools, but are not incapable of receiving such benefit in special schools or classes. . . . Medical certificates are to be required in every case from approved practitioners and on prescribed forms."

These are the cases which are detained until the age of sixteen, and it was in respect to one of them that the present controversy was initiated.

To a far more competent authority, who is, as I must confess, very strenuously opposed to my opinions, I am indebted for much valuable information as to the methods employed in these special classes. And I cannot help noticing in passing that, whilst a considerable number of those who have displayed their own ignorance in volunteering to correct mine are

much inclined to ride the high horse over me, and to lecture me on the duty of verifying my facts before rushing into print, the one genuine authority who really does know all about the matter preserves a studious courtesy in differing from me. But this, of course, is one of the eternal characteristics of controversy. I am bound to admit that my informant puts a new and welcome light upon the matter. These specially detained pupils, so it appears, are only employed at ordinary lessons in the mornings. In the afternoons they are instructed in various manual occupations. For example, they are taught to work at an ordinary carpenter's bench, or at chair-caning, basket-weaving, bent-iron, *repoussé*, saddlery, needle-work, cookery, laundry, and housewifery, and it is hoped soon to start a tailoring class for senior boys. Some of the cripple boys and girls are holding L.C.C. scholarships, and a great point is made of art-teaching to promising cripple pupils. Now to all this it is difficult to find any reasonable objection when once the principle that it is the duty of the State to administer free and compulsory education to the rising generation is admitted. I cannot help thinking that in the case of the mentally unfit it would be better still to abandon the ordinary school lessons altogether and to occupy the whole of the pupil's time in instructing him to do something that he can do rather than to spend half of it in trying to instil into him something which he has proved himself incapable of absorbing.

The question resolves itself mainly into one as to the practical value of education. When the Board Schools were originally established very few people dreamed of doing more than imparting to the children of the poor a very simple elementary training

of a wholly bookish character. The character of the education offered has changed almost out of knowledge since the early seventies, and the serious fact remains that a vast amount of that which it is sought to teach is not learned by large numbers of Board School pupils. In thousands upon thousands of instances it is not in the least degree essential to the happiness and well-being of the individual that it should be learned. It ought to be understood that the true function of the educationist is to qualify those who are under his charge for the kind of life to which their capacities and circumstances destine them. It is essential to this end that the gates of knowledge shall be opened without restriction, but those gates are open to every human creature who has learned to read and who has access to a library. As a matter of fact, there are millions in our midst who are not any wiser or happier or more useful to themselves and others than they would have been if they had never learned to read at all, but it is not the less necessary that everybody should be taught at least so much, if the other millions who do profit by a love and a knowledge of books are to have a free field. Until the advantages of education, as we commonly use the word, have been offered, it is impossible to tell whether they are going to be serviceable or no ; but when once you have taught a child to read, you may know, with a fair approach to certainty, whether it is worth your while to travel much further in that direction. Taste and intellect do not display their beginnings at any arbitrary age, and we know that a dullard often may blossom into a scholar or a poet by the time he is thirty.

The average man will live the average life, and will engage in an average sort of avocation. There are

certain things which it is needful that he should know, but for years past we have been stultifying ourselves with the theory that education is necessarily and essentially a bookish thing. I find myself seriously taken to task on the ground that I have spoken of the work of the Board Schools as involving a sorrowful waste of time. Well, I have no hesitation about accepting the one possible test. I declare that a very large body indeed of the youth of this country is unable to read intelligently after years of tuition in that simple art, is unable to spell correctly, is unable to write a decent letter, and unable to construct a grammatical sentence which makes even an approach to complexity. Our educational system has, in plain English, left a great mass of almost unleavened ignorance upon our hands. It is not merely that it has not universally been successful in teaching what it has professed and tried to teach, but that the national standard is most lamentably unsatisfactory when regarded broadly from the professional educationist's own point of view.

It is no answer to say that in many cases the system has succeeded, and to point to the thousands of intelligent men and women who have found a real profit in it. Nobody is concerned to dispute the advantages of a bookish education to those who are capable of receiving those advantages. But let any man with an open mind go into the world and observe for himself. Let him listen to the conversation of the people. Let him note the English he hears spoken. Let him note not merely its pronunciation, which, as Mr. Whiteing puts it, is suggestive of a nasty taste in the mouth, its vocabulary, which is almost as limited as that of a savage or a child, and its construction, which is in defiance of all rule, but let him

regard also the astonishing limitation of idea and the ignorance of common fact. The people who display these characteristics have all passed through our ordinary English curriculum, and they are just so many living evidences of its failure to benefit themselves.

Of course, it is difficult to see what better method than that already in existence is to be adopted. If it were not difficult, the solution of the problem would long since have been found by some amongst the throngs of capable and whole-hearted workers. But it may be possible to find some sort of guidance if we lay firm hold on certain root ideas. It is evident that as society exists the child who is not taught to read, write, and cipher is very seriously handicapped. We may put it as a statement which is certain of universal acceptance that the three R's form the irreducible minimum of a free compulsory education. They must be universally imparted, even though we are certain that many will never really utilise them, because it is only possible to discover who these are by actual experiment. But we must frankly face the fact that the system now in vogue for more than thirty years has failed to produce an educated people. It has succeeded admirably in a large proportion of cases, and it has failed just as decidedly in another proportion which is probably as large. It is evident, therefore, that the system is not universally adapted to the material it has to work upon, or that much of the material is intractable to treatment. Social conditions and home influences do much to advance or retard, and no system possible in existing circumstances can evade their effects. Yet is it not possible to recognise the fact that there are those upon whom our educational efforts as now conducted are thrown

away, and to do this before their time has been misapplied rather than afterwards?

Suppose we imagine a series of graduated schools. In the earliest class of the first of these we will suppose the Froebel system to be employed, the pupils being instructed by objects and exercises, and in the meantime being taught the beginnings of the three R's. As they progress in age and strength, suppose them to be passed on to other classes, in each of which the system shall be continued and expanded in such manner that a full half of their time is occupied in the study of precisely such arts and crafts as are enumerated above in just measure with their capacity. In my imaginary school no child, until it had reached the age of eight, should receive any formal bookish instruction whatsoever outside those same three R's, but the necessary lessons in reading aloud should be so arranged as to be interesting and enlightening, and to enforce simple, natural facts. And at as early a stage as convenient the writing lessons should be devoted to a recapitulation of the reading lessons. By the age of ten it should be easily possible to distinguish between those children who were reaping any real advantage from the methods employed, and those the soil of whose minds was not likely to repay further cultivation. I see no reason why the competent and willing should not be helped as far and fast as they can go, and these I would have transferred to a seminary of a higher scholastic character. The rest should be as they are, enjoying, at least, a chance of being rigidly grounded in the arts of reading and writing intelligently, but not being asked to carry loads beyond their mental strength, whilst the effort to induce a general handiness in the use of tools and household objects should never be relaxed. In short, for the services

of the schoolmaster and schoolmistress I would in all cases of backwardness and reluctance substitute those of the drillmaster, the artificer, and the teacher of the household arts. The plan, as it seems to me, would, at least, ensure the learning of *something* in place of that flat nothing which so many pupils have to show for all the years of their tuition.

### THE OCCULT WORLD AND TELEPATHY.

THERE can be little or no doubt as to the widespread nature of the interest which is felt in the attempts which I have made to arrive at some working hypothesis in relation to the action of those forces of Nature whose operations appear to transcend the recognised laws of being. That they do not, and cannot, transcend law itself we know. That they are as yet obscure to us, that we have not so far attained to any knowledge of them which deserves to be called scientific is equally certain. In the personal experiences which follow, I have ventured to offer myself as a sort of body for dissection. It will be observed that the whole gravamen of my case lies in the contention that the thinking and emotional apparatus with which man is furnished is of a much more delicate receptivity and a much greater expansive force than has been vulgarly imagined. The facts cited are such as have been confirmed by the patient and prolonged inquiries of men who are by no means visionary in their ideas or slovenly in their methods of investigation. If any working hypothesis is ever to be discovered, it can only be arrived at by the candid relation of individual experiences. If every one of

us were to shrink from avowal it is obvious that there could be no advance in knowledge.

I have already stated that the telling of mere ghost stories is inadvisable. The habit dangerously cheapens a subject of which one of two things is certain—it merits either to be left alone, or it deserves to be examined in as scientific a spirit as is brought to bear upon any object of physical inquiry. I have no objection whatever to set down something of what I have myself observed and known, premising that my experiences fall entirely short of those of the actual ghost-seer, and that I have known nothing on that side which has been strong enough to do more than persuade me of the possibility of completer revelations in the case of persons better fitted to receive them or more fortunately circumstanced than myself.

Without begging the question of fact one way or another as to the reality of apparitions, or the trustworthiness of those apparent intuitions from another world which seem to reach some of us so frequently, there is no doubt, of course, as to the existence of what we may, for convenience sake, describe as the ghost-seeing temperament. There are the two extremes of receptivity and of non-receptivity, and there are all the psychic grades which lie between. For my own part, I suppose myself to be one of the middle-men, with a leaning towards the sensitive and credulous side. If the ghostly theories be a delusion, I have never been able to delude myself, though I have tried hard after those conditions of mind under which I am instructed that direct communications from the outer spheres are most likely to be made. If the theories have a basis of truth, I have failed to find it for myself, though I have actually seemed to come

so near to it as to find doubt wavering. There have been occasions on which it would have been easy to surrender the mind if it had not been for an obstinate inward persistence in demand of evidence more complete. I do not know if the position is singular or common. It is a compound of an ardent desire with a determination not to be convinced except on evidence which would have decisive weight in any of the ordinary affairs of life.

Having thus set down with all candour my own mental posture towards the supernormal, I shall not be accused of precipitancy if I say that there are certain things, not yet universally or even generally recognised as a part of the psychic equipment of mankind, with respect to the existence and operation of which I am experimentally assured. I am not offering these as novelties, because they have been formally ratified by many scientific inquirers. I am simply adding my quota to experience by the affirmative that I *know* them. First amongst these is the certainty that the animating spirit of man is not confined to speech, writing, or action in the accepted sense, but that it is capable of operating, and does operate, from a distance. If I have proved anything for myself in my five-and-fifty years I have proved the truth of telepathy. It has long been a commonplace with me to be aware of the mood of a man whom I am about to meet for the discussion of business. It has long been a commonplace with me to be aware of the disposition of absent friends. There is no experience more familiar than the mental presentment of a person far distant from any natural sequence of my thoughts who meets me in the body a minute after his uninvited, unexpected projection on the screen of the mind. These are matters with regard to which

I surrendered doubt many years ago, vanquished by an accumulation of evidence which it was impossible to resist.

It is worth while to notice here that these certainties of mine are confirmed in the experience of many inquirers, amongst them being one whose whole temperament is so intensely opposed to illusion that his name is possibly better worth citing than that of most scientific examiners. The man I have in mind is Mark Twain, a born mocker of humbug of all sorts, and one of the last of human beings to yield himself to a mere temperamental illusion. So far, along the psychic road, the greatest living master of the rough-and-ready school of humour travels with me step by step, and I have a warmer welcome for his companionship than I should have even for that of a trained scientist, because his whole life and all his intellectual methods flatly contradict the idea of any sentimental self-deception. I cite his case, not to bolster any shaky credence of my own, but to show to those to whom these things are still doubtful that a man need not be a sentimentalist to believe in them.

I have purposely chosen the simplest and most widely known example of the power which certain people possess of associating themselves with the aura of others. So far I am secure of the approval of thousands, but I propose to carry my proclamation further. I am disposed to attach some credence to the idea of unconscious prevision, though only in a very limited degree. I will cite a solitary example which may go for anything or nothing. It goes for much with me, because it was the earliest precursor of many such experiences. It was the eve of Shakespeare's birthday, and I told some of my schoolfellows that on the following day I was to be taken to Stratford-on-

Avon on a pilgrimage to the poet's resting-place. I had no reason of which I am now conscious for that statement. It was wholly unwarranted by anything I knew, and I was fairly frightened when on my return home I learned from my father that he had planned to take me on such an expedition. It has been suggested with a real show of plausibility that the suggestion had been discussed in my presence when I was dozing or when I was absorbed in a book, and that some subconscious faculty took note of it. It may be so. But I can find no such explanation of later instances of the same order—all trivial in themselves, but all pointing in the same direction. They indicate nothing more than that expansion of the individual aura of which I have already written; but they help to prove to my individual satisfaction that human intercourse is not confined to those physical means within which it is commonly believed to be bound.

I confess further to a great disposition to believe in what is called clair-audience. I will not actually tell the story of my most convincing experience here. I have no right to tell it, but the broad facts are these. Five or six years ago I was lecturing in the United States. Two gentlemen well known in London theatrical circles conducted my tour. Any inquirer is welcome to their names. We were living together in apartments on Mount Vernon, in Boston. In the middle of the night I was awakened by a piercing cry. I was called by name three times and I knew the voice. I awoke quivering, and was too disturbed to sleep again. I spent the time till breakfast over a pipe and a volume of Tennyson. At the breakfast-table I told my story, and two or three hours later I received a cablegram announcing the sudden death

of the mother of that nearest and dearest friend whose voice had reached me in the night. My companions will confirm the two facts that I reported my disturbance before the news arrived, and that I identified the voice at the other end of the spiritual telephone. I quote this instance, not as being single in my experience, but as being the only one in which I am able to appeal to living witnesses who were deeply impressed by it at the time, who made note of it and signed a deposition. The common explanation of a fact of this kind is found in "coincidence." An impressive nightmare is followed by an impressive fact. The theory might be more satisfactory if "coincidences" were less frequent.

Here is yet another story, the solution of which is not quite easy on the coincidental ground. My eldest brother sailed some forty years ago from the port of Liverpool as an apprentice aboard the barque *Pacific*, commanded by a Captain G——. The first mate, a man named Mundy, carried a captain's certificate. The captain was a dipsomaniac, and there is no doubt that his apprentice was horribly ill-used by him. The boy was half-stripped and rope's-ended about the decks. He got such sleep and rest as he could get on washing planks, and the seeds of consumption were so thickly sown in him that he died at six-and-twenty, the only one of a large and individually stalwart family who ever showed a sign of that disorder. It happened that my maternal great-uncle, an undistinguished man of yeoman family—James Withers Marsh, of Church Vale, within six northward miles of Birmingham—lay dying. My mother nursed him in his last hours. Within thirty minutes of his death the old man struggled into a sitting posture, and asked in a loud and hollow voice, "Why can't you leave

the lad alone? Have you no bowels?" My mother tried to soothe him, and he said, "They're ill-treating poor Jack horribly." He spoke no more, but his last words were naturally remembered and discussed amongst us. Weeks later Captain Mundy brought my brother home—a wreck. Captain G—— had died in delirium and had been buried, I think, at the Azores. Mundy had assumed command and had brought back the ship to Liverpool. He had kept a log with sailor-like exactitude, intending to indict G—— for his ill-treatment of his apprentice on the voyage. The culminating point of cruelty set down in this record, with latitude and longitude and hour and minute, synchronised exactly with the time of old Marsh's dying vision, and I can remember yet the tanned seaman working out the difference between South Staffordshire and somewhere midway betwixt Cape Horn and the Azores.

In this instance I shall have the confirmation of every surviving member of a somewhat numerous family, and, however it may impress the reader who is disposed to be sceptical in such matters, it will probably be admitted that it would be unreasonable to ask me to retire from the beliefs at which I have arrived as a consequence of my acceptance of the narrative. I have had no alternative but to believe it. But it also, if it were universally accepted, can rationally be held to prove no more than that the anima and the body are not rigidly bound together, a postulate which to my own mind has been long established. Fascinating as the speculations opened to the mind along these particular avenues may be, it must be confessed that they leave us outside the real ghostly territory. If everybody accepted the beliefs I have offered without question we should

have arrived only at the conclusion that the mechanism of the mind is of a very delicate and compound nature, and that it has anticipated Röntgen and Marconi, in effect, without rivalling those discoverers in scientific precision of result. I believe the Psychical Research Society has confirmed cases in most respects similar to those which have been instanced here, but they have not succeeded in their attempts to establish a voluntary clair-audience, clair-voyance, or prevision. The man of science works under rules which, however abtruse, are verifiable by results which only vary in correspondence with varying circumstances which may with more or less preciseness be noted and classified. He can demonstrate his conclusions at will, and that is precisely what the believer in the occult cannot do. We are left with a mass of apparatus which will not work in given directions at given moments. That is because we do not yet know intimately the rules of the game we are playing, but it is not as yet demonstrated to us that we have no rules by which we ought to be guided.

#### THE LIMITS OF HUMAN CREDULITY.

LAST Wednesday (June, 1906) Frederick Foster Craddock was convicted of imposture by the magistrates of Edgware, and was fined ten pounds. The gentleman has been so long a shining light amongst believers in the tenets of Spiritualism that the circumstance comes as a shock to many people. It has driven some of his disciples, who, under ordinary conditions, are not more obviously mad or imbecile or disingenuous than their neighbours, into the

acceptance—or the pretended acceptance—of a theory of astounding improbability. It is time, if only for the moral credit of many respectable and worthy people who have allowed themselves to be gulled, that the line of defence which has been adopted in this case should be dispassionately examined and shown at its proper value. In the first place, it will be found reasonable and just to put ourselves in the place of those who for years past have accepted Craddock's claims to the possession of abnormal powers. He has stood to them as a bridge between the worlds of the living and the dead. There are hundreds upon hundreds who have believed that through him they have been brought into a genuine communion with the departed spirits of those whom they have loved. Their profoundest emotions and most reverential beliefs have been awakened by him, and it would be no less than amazing if they were not eager to find some explanation of a fact which appears to make a mock of what they have so dearly cherished.

There is nothing in the outside facts of the case which can be brought into dispute. An inquirer, who after two earlier *séances* with Mr. Craddock had arrived at the conclusion that he was a humbug, flung himself unexpectedly upon the apparition of a deceased "brother officer," and, finding the ghost solid material, brought him to the ground and held him there until a brother officer in the flesh flashed a light upon him, when he turned out to be the medium, precisely as his captor had expected. The medium was supposed to be in a trance in an arm-chair behind the curtains of the cabinet, but the arm-chair was empty, and Mr. Craddock was bodily outside. The ordinary intelligence leaps to the conclusion that the apparition seized in the dark and the person found

struggling a few seconds later were one and the same. It comes easy to suppose that Mr. Craddock was pretending to be a ghost, and it does not seem less safe and easy to presume that he would have found himself forced to recognise the fact that the trick was exposed. Now and again the police-officer who lays hands upon a burglar or a pickpocket in the way of business meets with the acknowledgment, "It was a fair cop, governor." Such an admission on the part of Mr. Craddock would have grieved and astonished the faithful beyond measure. It looks simple enough. Here is something pretending to be a spirit. You take hold of it and stick to it, and it turns out to be a man. It turns out, as a matter of fact, to be *the* man who has just drawn three half-crowns apiece from a congregation to which he has undertaken to introduce a ghost. It really looks uncommonly simple.

But you have to realise the fact that it will not be less than heart-breaking to the people who have believed that they have been brought into communication with the spirits of fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters, and lovers and playmates by this man's mediumship, if they are at once to accept the idea that he is a vulgar scoundrel who has imposed upon them by a trick so impudent and so shallow. The first line of defence against this dreadful thought is that the man has once had a real power, and, having lost it—whether temporarily or permanently—has been tempted into a fraudulent pretence of it. He was once a medium. Now the virtue has gone out of him. But that cannot undo the manifestations of the past. "We have seen," say the believers. "We know. No exposure, however crushing and complete, can prove fraud in antecedent cases.

Craddock is a fraud to-day, but he was a true man yesterday." This is a plea which cannot reasonably be scorned when it is offered by men and women who believe themselves to have had ample and rational demonstration in the past. If it were the explanation generally offered it would not be impossible to accept it, unless for those who repudiate the whole world of psychic phenomena as a delusion.

The curious part of the business is that there are many who decline altogether to accept the exposure as a proof that the medium was masquerading even in the particular case recorded. It seems to require an extraordinary hardihood to affirm that the object seized upon was really the apparition of an officer deceased, and that between the seizure and the production of the light it became Craddock. Yet the people who offer this extraordinary contention are certainly not mad in the common acceptation of the word, and amongst them there are persons of standing and repute. The theory advanced is coherent enough if you begin by accepting its initial postulate. This is that a spirit is able to "materialise" by availing itself of some portion of the component elements of the medium's body. It does not materialise to one sense alone. It becomes not only visible but tangible. The spirit hand has the warmth of life, and is capable of exerting a force, greater or smaller. The spirit form is an actual emanation from the body of the medium, and when it dissolves it returns to him. The suggestion is, of course, that a real weight of substance leaves the body of the medium and that it is possible for him or her to endure the strain of depletion only for a brief space of time at the utmost. If it were in any way possible to prevent its return the result would naturally be fatal. If any attempt

is made towards the physical restraint of the materialised spirit-form its immediate impulse is to reunite itself with its physical parent.

The materialist who is examining the question from his own point of view has no right to forget the existence of a great multitude of living people who affirm and believe that this materialisation is the outcome of a natural law of the existence of which they have repeatedly had the most convincing demonstration. You may believe it or not, but the time has long gone by when it could be said that the faith was professed only by impostors and the most credulous order of fools. But the difficulty which presents itself to the mind of one who is content to examine the question simply as one of ingenious and interesting speculation is to account for the peculiar operation of that imperative impulse to re-union which is supposed to have drawn Mr. Craddock from his cabinet, to incorporate himself with the ghost, instead of drawing the ghost into the cabinet to incorporate itself with Mr. Craddock. Is the believer ready to assume that the medium has parted for the time being with the larger moiety of himself, and that the apparition at the time of seizure is really more corporeal than the entranced sleeper in his cabinet? On any other assumption it is difficult to say why in the game of "Pull apparition—pull medium" the medium is not victorious. Why not simplify the business and conclude that the spirit had utilised the whole of Mr. Craddock from the beginning?

I have admitted that if you grant the initial position the suggestion is coherent. It is consistent with itself, but it is not more consistent with itself than it is with the rankest falsehood and the most impudent

imposture. If the question were isolated it would still take a very robust faith to swallow the explanation and to keep it down. But there are one or two things which have to be taken into account. The gentleman who seized the apparition which resolved itself into Mr. Craddock was favoured with an interview with the spirit of a wholly imaginary relative, an "uncle George," who had not only not passed into the spirit world, but had not even taken the preliminary step of being born. The medium introduced him further to the disembodied spirits of real relatives who were alive and well. Now, there is an explanation of this fact also. There are bad spirits who take a delight in mystification, lying entities who know no greater pleasure than to discredit the honest gentlemen who make a livelihood out of their communications with the half unknown. This may be so. I am not concerned to deny it, but it is growing evident that there is an accumulation of unfortunate circumstances in this case which—granting the medium to be an honest man—cannot fail to extort the sympathy of the least sympathetic. To be at once so extraordinarily gifted as a medium that he can dispense with the stronger half of his bodily self, and offer it as a loan to some military officer deceased, and at the same time to be so easily employed as a channel through which lying spirits can play practical jokes on people who are paying for trustworthy information, is to be doubly unhappy.

It would really appear as if those who are friendly to the cause of Spiritualism would on the whole do well if they dissociated themselves from Mr. Craddock. He is too unlucky a personage altogether, and his ill-fortune is not compensated for by his tact. A part of the accusation brought against him when

he was seized was that he had assumed certain disguises, and that he had false beards and moustaches in his possession. In answer to a proposal that he should be searched, he threatened to use physical force. It is, of course, distasteful in the extreme to any man to be searched, but Mr. Craddock should have bethought himself that it is known to be less distasteful to an honest man than to a rogue, and he would really have scored a point in his own favour if he had submitted to the ordeal. It was his first misfortune to have parted with too much of himself to the deceased military officer—an act of over-generosity which appears to have defeated itself, inasmuch as it leads to the disgraceful supposition that he falsely personated that respectable spirit. It is his second misfortune that so many members of his spiritual *entourage* should have no regard for veracity. It is his third misfortune to be inhabited by a soul of such lofty tone that it scorns to justify itself.

It should be the very first business of those who take the investigation into the affairs of the spirit world seriously to wash their hands of Mr. Craddock. If those who have the temerity to stand by him are justified, he is a person to be pitied, and circumstances have conspired against him very cruelly. Personally, I am disposed to admit the possibility of many things which appear on the outside to be at war with the common evidence of our senses. It is conceivable that Mr Craddock is one of the martyrs who have from time immemorial fallen victims to the spirit of research. If that is so, it is a tragic fate for him to have been made to look like a clumsy impostor, but no doubt the consciousness of his own rectitude will be a comfort to him. If the episode should help in

any degree to discountenance any person who makes a trade of communion with the departed—real or pretended—the most ardent of spiritualists may welcome it. The paid *séance* has been a field for fraud from the beginning.

Just as I am correcting the foregoing for the press, a copy of *Light*, which is the best-accredited organ of Spiritualism in this country, comes to hand. It offers no comment on the Craddock case, but it gives a fairer report of the hearing before the Edgware magistrates than is to be found in any of its contemporaries so far as I have seen. It offers no sanction to the assumption of the defending counsel that “it was inevitable if there was any truth in the theory [that the spiritual body came out of the medium] that the medium must be found in the grasp of the sitter in the circumstances of seizure as by Colonel Mayhew,” but it would be interesting to know authoritatively if that utterance is accepted by those who have the best right to speak officially. It will be obvious to any unprejudiced observer that the inevitability lies on the other side, and that “if there is any truth in the theory” it is a million times more probable that the elements of the medium would be returned to him than that the medium should be brought holus-bolus to them. The counsel’s argument is the lamest fetch imaginable. It has only to be confirmed by an official acceptance to bring the whole business of the *séance* into general contempt.

### A THEORY ABOUT GHOSTS.

I have recently (1904) lighted upon a letter which tells a ghost story of a rather striking sort. Nine people were

gathered together in the grounds of an English country house in broad daylight on a summer afternoon. One of them became aware of the presence of an unknown figure, and called the attention of a companion to it. They drew near and the figure vanished, but only to be seen immediately afterwards by some other members of the company, at whose approach it vanished once more. This went on until it had been seen by all, and then the figure disappeared for good. Nobody at first suspected it to be anything but an ordinary trespasser upon the grounds where it was seen, and of the persons to whom it successively appeared not one had been advised of its ghost-like habit of disappearing when approached. All the observers had the same story to tell. There was no local legend to guide them to any guess as to the original of the apparition, and nothing whatever is known to have happened as a result of its visit. It conveyed no message and made no gesture of significance, but simply appeared and disappeared in a way for which none of the nine people who saw it could account on any other ground than that it was altogether supernormal.

There were long ages during which a story of this kind would have been received with implicit credit, not only by the ignorant, but by the learned. Nobody would have seen any cause to doubt it, and when the school of doubt first began, by far the greater number even amongst thinking people would have referred the sceptic to the record of universal experience and belief. Two hundred years ago practically all the world believed in ghosts. Then gradually that belief became the exclusive property of the credulous and uninstructed, and somewhere in the early middle of the nineteenth century all grave and

reverent persons scoffed at the idea of it. It is worth notice that from the earliest ages of which we have record, and under all forms of civilisation with which we are acquainted, the belief in ghosts was practically unchallenged. The old Greeks and Latins were acute thinkers, yet they believed. The Middle Ages were not wholly darkened, yet the belief existed amongst their philosophers as well as amongst their common people. We may take it that until the growing wave of materialistic philosophy began at first to sap, and, later, to cover the stronghold of the faith, it had been universal. Sir David Brewster did much to imbue the popular mind with the idea that an apparition might appear to be actually real to the observer, while it could be scientifically accounted for by the fact, which he had himself observed, that an object called up by the memory or created by the imagination may be seen as distinctly as if it had been framed by the vision of a real object. It was Brewster's experience that these appearances follow the motions of the eyeball exactly like the spectral impressions of luminous objects. But this explanation, accurate as it is as far as it goes, cannot always apply in the numerous cases in which it is affirmed that two or more people have received the same impression at the same time.

We can easily conceive that at a moment of strained excitement or expectation one person's imagination may lead him to exclaim aloud with respect to the appearance of some fancied object, and that many others may believe themselves to perceive it also. Yet in those instances where without any such incitement of the imagination several persons have witnessed the same apparition it becomes more difficult to refer the fact to any recognised physical agency. The ques-

tion is here resolved into one of the credibility of witnesses, and this does not rest entirely on their repute for truthfulness under ordinary conditions. A something not closely observed at the time of its occurrence by other members of a scattered party is reported by one person who has taken pains to look at it. He is confident and rich in detail, and all the rest are confident and rich in detail in their after-narrative of the event—not because they are liars, but because their faint impressions have been vivified by the certainty of the first narrator. Considerations of this kind must always have weight with the conscientious investigator, but it cannot reasonably be said that they are always and everywhere destructive.

The strongest presumption that apparitions are not wholly illusory is afforded by those innumerable recorded instances in which the appearance of a friend, a lover, a wife, or a husband has been seen at the moment of death. At a given time a general officer is shot in India. His daughter in Edinburgh tells the clergyman with whom she is staying that she has clearly seen him at her bedside, in uniform, pressing his hand to his side as if in pain. The clergyman makes a note of the circumstance. The next mail brings home news of the outbreak of the great Mutiny and of the general's death. As to the truth of this story there can be no manner of doubt. The lady was a relative of Mr. Andrew Lang, and he records it in his excellent article on apparitions in the "*Encyclopædia Britannica*," with a comment on the dictum of Sir Walter Scott, whose opinion it was that the coincidence between death and distant apparition must frequently happen. Coincidence will hardly cover the ground in all the countless cases which are known.

An explanation may be found in a combination of

Sir David Brewster's discovery that in his own case an object of contemplation could assume an actual place on the retina, and the now accepted facts of telepathy. The last impulse of the wounded officer's soul is towards his child, is felt by her; and for a moment visualises itself. That is a seemingly rational idea, and in any case it is a thousand times more satisfactory than the theory of coincidence.

Defoe puts one side of the argument with his usual lucidity. "We have, we believe, as true a notion of the power of imagination as we ought to have. We believe that we form as many apparitions in our fancies as we behold with our eyes, and a great many more. But it does not follow from thence that there are no such things in nature." The old fallacy of assuming that, because one thing is another thing is not, crops up everywhere with a wearisome persistence. There are recorded instances beyond number in which the suggestion I have just offered as to the combined effect of telepathy and the visualisation of a mental image forcibly conceived will afford no satisfactory explanation. In a recent number of *Light* is published an account of the experiences of Baroness Peyron, "a highly esteemed Swedish lady," as narrated by herself. One of her stories touches on the very old belief that animals are conscious of apparitional presences. In the course of a manifestation of the familiar *Poltergeist* order, in which loud and distributed knockings were heard and articles of furniture were roughly moved, a terrier crouched howling under the bed-cover as soon as he heard the first knocks, and could not be got away so long as they continued. It is, of course, to be believed that dogs and horses are open to the influence of the moods of those human associates with whom they are in frequent

contact. I can imagine that a very strong emotion of terror in a man or woman might set up a current which might be felt by an animal trained to sympathy. But it appears from the narrative that the Baroness Peyron had grown so used to the manifestations that they had ceased to excite any emotion except one of weariness and annoyance, and a dog will not take shelter and howl in terror at a mere noise. The animal was terrified at the first knock, and before the furniture began to move.

The cheap and easy suggestion is always at hand that the cloud of witnesses who attest the reality of such manifestations are liars. The further cheap and easy suggestion that the manifestations themselves are, without exception, the results of an ingenious practical joke is also at anybody's call. Mr. Frank Podmore in his history of spiritualism is inclined to adopt this latter view. There is not the least atom of doubt that scores of houses which have had the reputation of being haunted have gained their notoriety by the pranks of mischievous servants. But I cannot find anywhere a satisfactory explanation of the animal terror which is excited in many cases, unless I allow myself to suppose that the creature displaying it is made conscious, in one way or another, of some presence which is not beheld by the human participants in the scene. The fact of the animal disturbance may be taken as proved. The belief in it has always been held. In the story, which is related at length in Mr. Podmore's book, of the remarkable phenomena which occurred at the house of the Wesleys, it is recorded that the mastiff was more disturbed even than the children; and we know out of the *Odyssey* and the Hebrew Scriptures that the recognition of apparitions by animals was currently believed in by

the ancients. The Cock-lane Ghost, whose performances set all London agog in 1772, ceased to excite wonder when the strange noises supposed to be produced by it were traced to the household servant. But in the case recorded by the great Wesley no satisfactory reason for the noises was ever discovered ; and here we have a case in which the narrator of the tale is entirely removed from suspicion, whilst the distress of the dog is dwelt upon with emphasis. Mere noises do not distress a mastiff, and the reason for the inward trouble must be sought elsewhere. It is easy enough to suppose that the human members of the household may have been influenced by superstition, but it is clearly impossible to imagine a superstitious dog. Here, again, we may still suppose the telepathic transference of emotion from the higher animal to the lower.

We are compelled to leave the question open, but the interest it excites can never wholly cease, although a complete conviction on either side can only be arrived at by those who have had vouchsafed to them a something which they can accept as proof positive in the way of personal experience. It is very hard to believe that a scientific observer like Sir William Crookes can have allowed his senses to be tricked in the famous case in which he examined a supposed materialised form by the light of a phosphorus lamp, and actually embraced that form and found it palpable whilst the medium was in sight. There remains always the suggestion that by astute trickery a second person may have been introduced into the apartment in which the phenomenon was observed, and the careful mind will always refuse to accept as proof of an apparition anything which is at all susceptible of a material explanation.

I ask myself if a solution of a mystery which has so greatly excited the world's interest in all ages may not have been brought within sight by the scientific recognition of the two facts already mentioned, which, as I take it, are beyond reasonable dispute. The first of these is that in some exceptional organisms it has been found that the form and colour of an object strongly conceived by the mind may be cast upon the retina from *within* so definitely that it is possible to mistake the image thus produced for an object producing a similar effect from *without*. The next is that in sensitive persons the impact of a telepathic wave may produce an effect of the same character. (Professor Ray Lankester, in a recent letter to the *Times*, in which he called upon Sir Oliver Lodge to abase himself and recant, denies the assumption that telepathy has been proved. This means no more than that it has not been proved to him. With me it has long been a commonplace of experience and does not admit of argument.) The next suggestion is that the terror of animals may always have been originally excited by a sympathy with the human observer, and that where, as in the case of the Baroness Peyron, the human observer has outgrown fear, the original agonies of terror may yet be renewed in the less intelligent nerve and brain centres of a dog.

## BELIEF IN GHOSTS.

NOT one man in a million has the courage of his real opinions. It takes more than an average valour by far to confess to a belief in the supernatural. The fact is that the majority of us are like the devils of Scripture who "believe and tremble" without admitting the

authority of their belief. And so it is a refreshing thing to find a writer like Mr. W. S. Lilly, in the *Nineteenth Century*, pronouncing out and out for a personal belief in ghosts. He does not say that he has ever seen one. He makes no appeal to personal experience, but is just content to rest himself upon authentic evidence. It is a pretty old saying that whilst there are few men who do not know a man who has seen a ghost, there are none who have actually seen a ghost for themselves ; but this is an obvious lie of the most elementary type, because nobody can be aware of the opinions of a witness who has not given evidence. The vast majority of educated people shrink from the expression of a set belief on this matter, and, very oddly, a great number of Christian men and women who repose an implicit faith in the Biblical narrative regard a belief in ghosts as being in a sort of a fashion irreligious. To believe that the ghost of Samuel appeared to Saul in the cave of the Witch of Endor is, of course, a thing essential to faith at large, whilst the suggestion of a real credence in any modern ghost story is an insult to the intelligence. But this attitude of the mind obviously will not serve ; for, if there is one thing clearer than another, it is that the conditions of Nature as we know them do not change. If ever there were apparitions from another world, we are just as liable to their visitations to-day as we ever were, and we shall suffer or enjoy that liability until the end of time. What we call the supernatural is only that which we have not yet succeeded in classifying and reducing to dimensions, and, if it have any genuine existence, we may make up our minds that it is at its root as natural as any of the commonest phenomena of our daily lives.

Müller in his "Physiology of the Senses" lays down the maxim that "when a person who is not insane sees spectres and believes them to be real, his intellect must be imperfectly exercised," and this phrase puts into a nutshell the ordinary Philistine view of the matter. But it by no means disposes of the question, though it may well illustrate the *parti-pris* with which the modern scientific inquirer has often approached it. From the point of view of the Man of Science there is no such thing as a ghost, and he does not descend from his intellectual pedestal to inquire into the veracity of any story he may hear, but sets himself to work on the authority of Newton and Bain, together with many illustrious moderns, to show how the most credible of witnesses in any of the ordinary affairs of life may have been deceived by some trick of the senses. The authorities on whom he relies are not always entirely with him. In Lord King's "Life of Locke," for instance, there is a passage the text of which I cannot precisely recall, although its sense is clearly in my mind. Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to his great co-temporary, writes to the effect that a question posed by the latter with respect to a constantly recurring phantasm in the case of a person then under Locke's observation involves another about the power of fancy "which, I must confess, is too hard a knot for me to untie." Up to a point the laws of optics serve the turn of the most eminent of scientists and philosophers, but there arrives a moment at which they are of no further use to him. This is, of course, the psychological moment for the believer in the super-normal. It is here that he steps in to proclaim the knowledge even of Sir Isaac Newton incomplete, and to affirm that there is a something beyond, which has not yet been thoroughly investigated.

It really does not seem a wholly impious thing to say that Müller's dictum might be reversed without any great offence to reason, as thus : When a person not insane receives evidence from a person not insane and declines to examine it, his reason is imperfectly exercised. It is a very vulgar proverb which lays down the axiom that what everybody says must be true, but after all what many people believe—not merely in a parish, but the wide world over and through the lapse of all the centuries—is likely to have a touch of truth in it. The belief in ghosts has sanction enough, but our most recent writer does not concern himself mainly with that side of the question. The problem he offers is this : Granted that ghosts are in their own ethereal way genuine things, is it a wholesome practice to talk about them ? "Allowing that they [ghost stories] may be, and often are, more or less true, is the telling of them a wholesome amusement ?" Mr. Lilly answers his own question in the negative, and I for one am in complete accord with him, but he does not seem to me to have got hold of the proper reason. The real reason why the telling of mere ghost stories ought to be discouraged is that it tends to cheapen and degrade the whole question. The most serious of all conceivable problems is involved here. If ever in the whole history of mankind there were one authentic return from the grave—if ever one traveller came back from the bourn to which humanity is bound—the question of our after life were settled once for all. Granted once a spectre, *not* an illusion of the senses, and we know that our lives are rounded into at least one other, and that our inevitable plunge into apparent death is not final. One real ghost would set us beyond discussion.

There is one thing which has to me presented a lifelong puzzle. Why should a ghost be terrible ? One understands readily the haunted criminal's horror—the blood-stained thing with accusing eyes and inexorably-fixed finger pointing on to doom. But the parted friend, the man we loved ! Why should we wave him off, as Mrs. Browning says, with that "unreasoning awe " ? Suppose that I should raise my eyes from the page on which I am now writing, and should see in the arm-chair which faces me the form of my old father, dead now this many years, why should I be alarmed ? And yet, though I am writing in broad daylight, my nerves crisp at the fancy and a sort of terror lurks in it. Many and many a time beyond counting since the meek and unambitious old man laid himself down to his last sleep I have tried to speak to him or to hear him speak, and I have half-believed myself in communion with him, but never without the sense of which the oldest poet of the world was conscious when he wrote " a spirit passed before my face and the hair of my flesh stood up." Possibly—probably—the real fear which lives in most of us is that we should be known. He was a bitter philosopher who first gave out the saying that the man who respects himself is lost, but there was a certain truth in him, *quand même*. Our dearest friends, our most intimate associates, don't quite know all the worst of us. We keep our seamy side inside and we turn our smoother surface to the world. The fear of the ghost is the reproach of conscience—or, at least, this is so when the ghost presents himself in harmless form. One of the most blameless of men, one in whom time so far has found no blemish, a soul of unstained raiment, if ever there were such on earth, has written : " Do we indeed desire the dead ? " And

it is not the confusion which might ensue from actual return, it is not that "the hard heir strides about the lands, and will not yield them for a day"—these are not the things which perturb his imaginings. But

How pure in heart and sound in head,  
With what divine affections bold  
Must be the man whose heart would hold  
An hour's communion with the dead.

There's the rub. We are afraid of our dead, even of those we have loved the best and who have best known us, because we fear lest they should know us too intimately. We figure the passed spirit as something far other than ourselves, looking on us "with larger, other eyes than ours," and yet somehow failing to make plenary allowance for faults and failings which they must once themselves have shared.

Mr. Lilly would have us cease to inquire into the ghostly theme, not so much even because the foolish stories of Yuletide darken sanctities with prose as because there is something wicked in the attempt to "pry," in Macaulay's phrase, "into the mystery of the grave." His contention is that we have no right to look into the Beyond, and he fortifies himself with the opinion of Cardinal Newman, who, in his sermon on the Ignorance of Evil, argues urgently that man has no *right* to attempt to pierce the veil by which he is surrounded. "This," says the Cardinal, "seems very strange to the man of this day. The only forbidden subjects, which they can fancy, are such as are not *true*. . . . Falsehood they think wrong . . . . because false. But they are perplexed when they are told that there may be branches of real knowledge yet forbidden." In Mr. Lilly's own words, inquiries into these matters are "rash intrusions into the Secret of the King; by-paths to things beyond flesh and

blood ; . . . leading not to sane and safe knowledge but to bewilderment, illusion, and despair." For my own part, I should disclaim this doctrine with every force and every fibre of the mind. What man can conquer is here to provoke him to conflict and to victory. Let Reverence be the herald of Knowledge, and then " let Knowledge circle with the wind." It is our business to know whatever may be known, and not to quail in the presence of any truth, to whatever conclusions it may lead us. We may not all attend an immediate revelation at the hands of the Psychical Research Society, but it will appear to many that Mr. Lilly despairs too easily when he bemoans its failure, so far, to achieve definite results. He tells his readers that two dear friends of his own, Mr. Frederick Myers and Mr. Edmund Gurney, laboured abundantly, aided by a multitude of calm, candid, and careful inquirers, and he asks what is the outcome of the efforts of those two highly-disciplined and most accomplished intellects. " Is it other than shadowy, illusory, contradictory, mocking ? " I dare not affirm that it is, but I remember that the Society for the Promotion of Psychical Research was inaugurated only a very few years ago, that it is the first organization of its kind, and that it has actually arrived at one or two valuable conclusions. If Rome were not built in a day, what date can we hope to fix for the completion of that spiritual city for the first sight of whose majestic towers the eyes of men are hungry ?

The Spiritualists, who are estimated to number about four millions in Great Britain and the United States, have long since resolved themselves into a Society for the Encouragement of Ghostly Visitations. That is their *raison d'être*. They profess to have met with a certain amount of success—enough, at least,

to encourage even the most reticent and thoughtful amongst them to a completer inquiry. But I notice that both those who encourage investigation and those who implore the world not to continue it are at one with respect to an issue which is possibly the most important of all. They agree that if one sort of intelligence is liberated so also is another. If the White Angel who would counsel us for good is sometimes present with us, his dark adversary is no less with us for evil. We are thus surrounded with ministrants of safety and of harm. There is no older idea. We teach the fancy to our children—or we permit it to be taught—in all manner of picture-books and parables, and yet it does not enter into the average belief of the average man, and if you were to broach it on the Stock Exchange, or wherever men most do congregate, you would naturally expect to be laughed at, not merely because of its incongruity with the money-making instinct and the temper of the place, but because of the rooted incredulity which flourishes side by side with a theoretical acceptance. Almost all men at one time of their lives have believed it, and by far the greater number have lived to regard it as an interesting superstition.

But if it were true ? It would afford a solution for a problem which has so far evaded the researches of the wisest. There is nothing more obscure than the origin of thought and impulse ; but all people who are not purely stupid and animal have experienced the feeling that both one and the other are at times communicated from some source outside the personal consciousness. It is a commonplace to say that we do not know what prompted such or such a thought. There is a frequent failure to establish a nexus between the last thought in the mind and that which succeeds

it, and it happens to some of us every day to be surprised by some seeming intuition which has hitherto been far from our imaginings. It is all very well to pooh-pooh the idea as credulous and childish, but it is worth while to catch hold of it and examine it. The worst of it is that it is so very easy to go mad, and many feeble intellects lose their balance on that side. But to the sane and well-equipped intellect there is no danger in these speculations, however far they may seem to carry us afield. It is the privilege of man to investigate a whole universe which is crowded with mysteries. More, it is his duty to discover what he can, in whatever sphere of inquiry he may find himself, and the most venerable of Bishops will not scare him from the investigation of the phenomena by which he is surrounded.

### THE SEERS OF VISIONS.

THE correspondence in relation to "dreams and visions" carried on recently in the columns of the daily press affords evidence—if evidence were needed—of the permanent interest which is taken by all sorts and conditions of men in the occult and mysterious. It is one of the chief and the abiding passions of the human mind to explore the unknown, and more especially to establish the reality of the communion of soul with soul. The reason which lies at the root of this desire is not to be found merely in such a vulgar love of the marvellous as is seen amongst a rustic ale-house company, who tell and listen to ghost stories of winter nights, and go homeward with tremors of apprehension through the village churchyard in the dark. The fact is, that

most men and women are sometimes conscious of the stern truth that with the rarest individual exceptions we are doomed to pass from the cradle to the grave without coming into genuine spiritual contact with a fellow-creature. We walk lonely. Most of us feel that we are not in sympathy with the attitude of those about us in respect to ourselves. The *femme incomprise*, who makes a morbid complaint that nobody understands her, and who finds her life embittered by that fact, does but express in a foolishly exaggerated form a feeling which is practically universal amongst mankind. There are times when men of a nature most self-unconscious are aware of their detachment from their kind, and crave for a companionship of sympathy, and it is this longing which has done more than anything else to keep alive the belief—or the hope—that an approach to the departed is a real or a possible thing, and that the unencumbered essence of a dead friend may enter into a comradeship with a soul which is still confined to the flesh, more intimate and intense than was possible before.

The downright sceptic has a very free-and-easy way of dealing with the problem. To his way of thinking, there is no choice between hallucination and downright falsehood. Either the professed ghost-seer has been humbugged by his own senses, or he is trying to humbug those whom he can get to listen to him. It is certainly a very possible solution, but, granting it for the moment to be the true one, we are forced to the conclusion that a very considerable number of intelligent people whose word can be accepted with safety in the ordinary affairs of life are very easily to be gulled by what they believe themselves to have seen and heard. The people who have given evidence in all seriousness are confined to no

class of mind. The gravest and most serious have made solemn affirmation of the reality—to them—of their own experiences. The point I wish to insist on is that it is at least reasonable to suppose that if every person who honestly believes himself to have encountered a ghost is the victim of hallucination there would be discernible a certain type more or less recognisable as being liable to that sort of delusion. But this is by no means the case. The witnesses are of both sexes, of all ages, of all kinds of occupation, of all ranks in life, and of every variety both in temperament and in intellectual power. If the sceptic is right, a very notable disorder of the senses is indicated, and it is curious that there is no condition of apparent health of mind and body which makes man, woman, or child immune from its attack.

Now, there *are* conditions of mind and body which are favourable to self-deception, but so far as can be known, the physiological and pathological state of many of the best authenticated ghost-seers has been quite normal. It thus becomes necessary to assume in the acceptance of a theory of hallucination that the human entity in full health and mental vigour is liable to an instantaneous arrest or distortion of the faculties of perception—that this arrest is often momentary, and that it may happen once in a man's lifetime and no more. This is conceivable, of course, but it would not appear that the sceptic has taken it sufficiently into account. It is not worth while to deny that there have been barefaced falsehoods by the million—hysterical exaggerations of trivial realities—half-conscious embellishments of mystery and wonder applied to ill-observed happenings. All that goes without saying. But when it is all eliminated and allowed for, there remains a mass of serious

evidence from which it is evident that only one of two conclusions is possible. Either the human machine at its sanest and most normal is liable to the most absolute, the most instantaneous, and most impermanent disorganisation, or the evidence in favour of the apparition of the departed must be accepted. For one brief moment in a sane and wholesome lifetime it is possible for a man to fall into a condition of insanity. Either that must be concluded or we must accept the evidence offered. The person who is habitually unable to trust the evidence of sight, touch, and hearing is insane. The person who suffers from such a failure to correlate his perceptions is insane for just so long or so short a period as his inability endures.

The dreams of sleep are recognised by common consent as being generally the result of a partial consciousness in a state of uncontrol, though there are instances beyond number of dream forecasts which have been fulfilled, of revelations of past fact unknown to the dreamer, and of the intrusion both of living and of departed spirits on the intelligence of the sleeper which have been regarded as genuine for reasons of less or greater value. There is one dream aspect which would appear to be rare, although in my own case I have found it a constantly recurring thing. There was a superstition to the effect that if a sleeper dreamed the same dream three times running it was certain to come true. What should be said of a dream which for a series of years becomes nightly—or almost nightly—familiar. I know a certain beautiful stretch of moorland with a great mountain-peak in the midst of it. At the foot of this peak there is a bowery hollow, with a hazel brake beyond it, where the boughs are so closely intertwined that one has

to unknit a loose basket-work of knotted branches in order to make a way through them. I have never seen that nook except in dreams, but there were times in my life when for weeks I rambled through it every night and always encountered the same adventures, and always—at one spot, and after one particular occurrence—found myself gifted with the power of flight. Merely by an effort of the will I left the turf and soared in spirals round and round that peak until I sailed about its summit, and saw beneath a mighty prospect with a river in it, with three locks, and one shining space of water below the other like polished strips of silver. It was always a happy dream ; and I used to go to sleep in the certainty that it would come to me, and when it came, I knew it for what it was, and recognised all the familiar places just as I should have done if I had gone home to a real country. As I grew quite used to it I have thought on many nights, "Here is the dear old dream back again." My old chief, George Dawson, was accustomed to say that the only thing needed to make sleep a perfect thing was that a man should experience the felicity of knowing that he was at it. Nestling into this familiar dream I seemed to realise his aspiration.

Of course, the psychology of the repetitive dream is simple. Sometimes the subliminal consciousness, and as often the supra-liminal, is dwelling on the earlier version of the dream, and so continues until it reacts itself, and, since Time in dreams is abolished, the realisation of an instant renews the seeming experience of a whole summer day.

The literature of the phenomena of sleep is rich in examples of sudden development of mental power. One of the best-known instances in England of the exercise of the fullest power of Genius in sleep is that

of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's fragmentary dream ode, "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure-dome decree." The poet never gave us anything more deeply steeped in the essence of romance and melody in his happiest waking hour. But I find that the common experience of these dream achievements is that they are exasperatingly worthless and futile. I recall with great clearness the sensations of awe and joy and wonder with which I once read a manuscript poem in a dream. Shakespeare's rich and generous hand was there and Milton's music at its noblest. The whole thing was, beyond description, sweet and glorious. And when I awoke in the morning—actually remembering some of the lines—they drivelled abjectly and unmeaningly. I have told the story of this dream to several contemporary workmen in letters, who have paralleled it in their own experience. With one of them it has been a thing of some frequency to wake in exuberant laughter at some imagined occurrence, and to find it altogether flat and unamusing when looked at with a clear mind. In such cases the dream is the mere impression of a mental sensation—an awestruck joy in beauty or an extravagant sense of comedy—and the associations by which the sensation appears to be provoked are really of a nature to produce its opposite. As to the reason of the sensation, there may possibly be something to be discovered in the recent speculations of an English astronomer which are interesting enough to justify more than a passing examination.

In a recent number of *Modern Astrology* Mr. G. E. Sutcliffe, a member of the Leeds Astronomical Society, presents his readers with an argument in favour of the probable existence of a physical foundation for the ancient belief in astrology. Most reading people

are by this time familiar with the latest guess of science at the truths of Nature in the gross. It is simply that every existing object in the universe is composed of one element, and that the unit of that element is the electric eon. Mr. Sutcliffe's suggestion is that each one of the heavenly bodies is charged with magnetic and electric forces, the one attracting and the other repelling, and in the exercise of these forces he finds an explanation of the planetary rotation. He imagines an eternal discharge of these forces and an eternal reception of them from and in all heavenly bodies ; the eonic streams of attraction and repulsion permeating space and acting in infinite gradations of power as a result of comparative nearness or distance, and of the unceasing permutations brought about by the constant changes in the astronomic aspects of the worlds to one another throughout the Cosmos. This is interesting if only as affording an intelligible reason for the rotary movement of the worlds, for which until now no adequate explanation has been found ; but it grows fascinating to the speculative mind when it is once recognised that the eonic streams—supposing their existence to be accepted—must necessarily exert an influence on every object with which they come into contact, whether it be sentient or inanimate. Thus literally, and as a matter of scientific fact—may the influences of the entire universe be raining upon us in perpetuity.

The foundational idea is that of the electric unit and of its ceaseless exercise of magnetic and electric forces. If the latest idea of the scientists be true, the thinking, acting being, Man, is in perpetual flux, giving out his own eonic discharge in every thought as well as in every pulsation, and drawing in such share of the eonic discharges of the entire planet as he has capacity

to receive. But if the rotary motion of all the planets is to be traced to the effect of the positive and negative polarities of all upon each one of them it follows that the universe is bound together in an actual physical bond, and that the starry influences are a real thing which varies in intensity in proportion as the bodies which create it are massed or scattered, or are brought nearer or carried into distance. A something which is the primal and only element of the universe—a something identical with ourselves—is put in movement by our very thoughts and emotions, and is carried into the universal stream which goes forth from all to all and travels beyond our conceptions of space and to the annihilation of our conceptions of time.

It is a stupendous thought, and the result of modern research is certainly not to make it appear improbable that it is literally true. It is a guess, and for the present it must remain a guess; but it holds great elements of probability, and within the experience of men now living it may be as solidly established as the truth of gravitation. We are coming nearer and nearer to the certainty that thought and feeling are endowed with the faculty of locomotion, that they travel by other than the material courses of which we are commonly conscious. For ages men have accustomed themselves to say that at such or such a time a thought was "in the air." A figure of speech may yet prove to embody a literal fact, and we may learn to believe that a dream may result from the joy or the terror of a stranger far removed.

## DREAMS AND ILLUSIONS.

IT is not surprising that my correspondents, dealing with the theory about ghosts, which I recently advanced, should in some instances have diverged into a consideration of the cognate subject of dreams. Mr. Hermann Vezin sends me a curious story of his old friend and associate, Charles Kean. I have amplified the historical facts of the case from the details supplied by contemporary journals. On March 11, 1841, the steamship *President* left New York for Liverpool. When she was two days from the port of departure there was terrific weather in the Atlantic, and she is supposed to have foundered with all hands. She was first reported as delayed and then as missing, and nothing further was ever heard of her. The public anxiety concerning the vessel's fate was increased by the fact that she carried at least two distinguished passengers, a son of the Duke of Richmond, and Mr. Tyrone Power, the well-known comedian. Charles Kean had a dream to the effect that he was present at some public gathering, where a gentleman entered and announced that the *President* had been sighted, and was then in the act of entering the Mersey. Some days later he had told his dream to a lady, who was but little impressed by it, when a gentleman entered with the announcement, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have good news for you. The *President* has been sighted and is now entering the port of Liverpool." The news was perfectly authentic, but it did not refer to the ill-fortuned vessel concerning the fate of which the public mind

was just then disturbed. There was another vessel of the same name.

There are numerous well-authenticated cases of dreams in which the unknown has been revealed, whether in relation to past, present, or future events. There is a vision recorded by Dr. Gregory, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh (whom I take to be identical with the inventor of a certain nauseous powder familiar to many nurseries), in which a young officer having been hypnotised by one Major Buckley saw a diamond cross which was presented to Mary Queen of Scots by Rizzio. There was at this time extant an inventory of the jewels owned by that unhappy Princess, but it contained no mention of such an ornament as the young officer described. But nine years after the vision, and three years after a description of it had been published by Dr. Gregory, another inventory was discovered hidden in a mass of law papers at the Record Office in which such an object as that seen in the nameless young officer's dream is shown to have existed. This is an example of the dream revelation of the unknown in the past. Here is an example of the revelation of the unknown in the present. William Hone, the compiler of the Every-day Book, is said to have been converted from materialism by this singular dream. He imagined himself in a strange room where his attention was particularly attracted to a peculiar knot in one of the window-shutters. Finding himself at a later date in a part of London into which he had never before penetrated, he was shown into a room which he recognised as that seen in his dream. "If it be really the same apartment," he said, "there will be a curious knot in the wood of the window-shutter." The knot was there, and on this curious circumstance he became

convinced that there was something in the constitution of the human mind which did not accord with the theories he had hitherto held. And here is an authentic example of a revelation of the future which, grotesque as it is, serves as well as an illustration as if it related to the most tremendous issues. The wife of Bishop Atlay of Hereford dreamed that there was a pig in the dining-room of the palace. She told her children and their governess of this dream before family prayers. When these were over, she went into the dining-room and there was the pig. It was proved to have escaped from the sty after Mrs. Atlay got up.

All three of these stories are related in Mr. Andrew Lang's book of "Dreams and Ghosts," and the first thing that strikes the reader is their extreme triviality and want of meaning. Mr. Hermann Vezin's story of Charles Kean is not the less curious and interesting because the apparent revelation of the actor's dream turns out to be purely abortive, as if some sportive intelligence had played a practical joke upon the sleeper. There are well-known cases in which some tangible result has been arrived at, as in the instance of the discovery of the body of Maria Marten, the victim of William Corder. Here the mother of the murdered woman dreamed on three consecutive nights that her daughter was buried in a certain Red Barn. Search being made, the fact proved to tally with the dream, and the conviction of the murderer followed on the discovery. Here an actual something is realised as the result of a dream, but the case is not more interesting to the psychologist than that in which an unknown jewel is seen, and is afterwards proved to have had a real existence. It is not more curious than the absurd forecast of the presence of a pig in

the dining-room of a Bishop's palace. It would, of course, be easy to multiply instances, for stories of a similar character swarm in the records of all those writers who have dealt with the phenomena of dreams and hallucinations. Some of them present an apparently insoluble problem to the mind, and others are easily susceptible of explanation. Dr. James Sully, one time Grote Professor of the Philosophy of Mind and Logic at University College, in his book on illusions, tells a story as related to him by Mr. W. H. Pollock. A lady staying at a country house saw in a dream, and afterwards on awaking, an apparition of a strange-looking man in mediæval costume, a figure by no means agreeable and altogether unfamiliar to her. She was not then aware of the reputation of the room in which she had spent the night. It was currently reported to be haunted by that same somewhat repulsive-looking mediæval personage who had troubled her inter-somnolent moments. But the explanation was immediately at hand. A portrait of this personage was hanging on the bedroom wall. The lady was profoundly unconscious of having seen it, but the case is evidently one of a very familiar type in which the image of an object is assimilated by the mind without the surface knowledge of the observer.

The same process may be seen at work in the authenticated instance of a barrister who, having sat up over his correspondence, went out late at night to post his letters, and on his return discovered that he had lost a cheque of considerable value. He searched for it in vain, but on going to sleep he dreamed that he saw the cheque curled round an area railing not far from his own door. He woke up, dressed, walked to the place indicated by his dream

and found the cheque there. His own explanation of the matter was that he had been sub-consciously aware of the fall of the cheque from his pocket, and that in his dream his deeper memory was awakened. Now, it is not so very long since the fulfilment of a dream of this sort would have seemed utterly inexplicable on ordinary and rational lines, and the fact that it is now so readily to be explained encourages the hope that in the fulness of time the entire range of dream action may become transparent to us. At present there is nothing before us but the conception of a whole underworld in which psychic forces at present unknown to us are working, whether as the spiritualists believe in the form of disembodied souls, or by some obscure mechanism of the human machine which the most patient and searching inquiry has not yet exposed to us.

Among waking illusions the best-known instance is that of Nicolai, the Berlin bookseller, which has been told too often to endure repetition. The story of the Marquis of Londonderry and his vision of "the radiant boy" is not quite so trite. It is to be found in Dr. Forbes Winslow's "*Anatomy of Suicide*," and is quoted by the Chevalier de Boismont in his work on *Hallucinations*, an English translation of which was published by Renshaw, of London, in 1859. The story of Lord Londonderry is that on a visit to a friend in the north of Ireland he had assigned to him for the night an ancient and imposing apartment. The furniture and pictures interested him, and he made a somewhat close inspection of the room. He undressed with the assistance of his valet, and when left alone put out his candle and disposed himself to sleep. He was surprised to find the canopy of his bed illuminated, and on drawing aside the curtain

he saw before him the figure of a fair child surrounded by a brilliant halo. His lordship suspected a jest and rose to examine the apparition. It retreated as he advanced and vanished on the hearthstone of the antique chimney-piece, leaving him in darkness. In the morning, still suspicious of a trick, the guest was at first silent, and watched for some sign which would enable him to identify its author. Detecting nothing of the sort, he was at last impelled to relate the adventures of the night. His host assured him that the apparition was well known to the household, and was currently named "the radiant boy." It was regarded as an omen of good fortune.

Now, how are we to account for this categorical story? We may accept it as the record of a fact if we are so disposed. We may dismiss it as an impudent invention, but I think that this is only possible to a downright stupid scepticism. De Boismont puts it under the heading "Hallucinations co-existing with sanity." But many people are certified to have known of the apparition of the radiant boy. It enjoys a reputation as an omen. How account for the fact that the same image is apparent to the perceptions of different people at different times? Is it conceivable that the active interest of those persons by whom former appearances were accepted as fact may have been concentrated upon the occupant of the haunted chamber, and that a sufficiently vivid presentment of their own conception may have been transmitted to his mind to induce the vision he reports himself as having seen? Or may the story of the radiant boy have reached the Marquis of Londonderry through the normal channels, and have been forgotten until revived in the subliminal consciousness by the aspect of the apartment?

I recall a personal experience which made a strong impression not only on my own mind, but on that of the friend who shared it with me. We were on a walking tour in the Moselle Valley, and in some river-side village—I am not quite certain, but I am inclined to think it was at Wasserbillig—we were forced by a sudden downpour to take refuge in an inn. We took luncheon there, and whilst our meal was being prepared we were shown into a bedroom in which we washed our hands. This apartment was long and narrow. It held two beds, which were so arranged that the foot of each was presented to the foot of the other. One of the large white porcelain stoves so commonly seen in Germany stood between them. My companion—a well-known English composer who is still living—and myself were alike strongly conscious of a strange and indefinable sensation on entering this room. It is by no means easy to express the feeling, but it was altogether creepy and eerie. Neither of us said anything at the time, but we compared notes afterwards. Rain continued to fall until late in the evening, and we perforce decided to take supper and to sleep where we had sought shelter. The night turned out cold, and a fire was lit in the white-tiled stove. Both my friend and myself noticed a curious reluctance on the part of the woman of the house and her daughter to allow us to remain. On taking up our quarters for the night we were again conscious of that same indefinable sense of something uncanny which had struck us on our first entrance. We lay smoking and chatting in bed for perhaps half an hour, bade each other good-night, and put out our candles. We lay silent for a long time, each in profound discomfort, and each simulating sleep. At last I could endure no longer. I groped for matches, re-lit my

candle, took a book from my knapsack and essayed to read. My feet were towards the stove and were icy cold. My head was feverishly hot. I found it impossible to fix my attention on the printed page. I resigned the attempt and once more we lay a long time in darkness.

Then my companion arose, taking great precaution against disturbing me. He lit his candle and his pipe, and set about the revision of a score on which he had been working in the afternoon. He also resigned the effort, and in effect each of us lay awake in misery until daylight. In the morning we were rather cross-examined as to whether we had slept well. Had we been in any way disturbed? Had we passed the night in comfort? Were we quite sure? Our joint refusal to complain of anything caused an evident surprise. When we were out in the clear summer morning tramping by the shining, peaceful river we opened our minds to each other. My friend's sensations had been throughout in all respects similar to my own. What reputation the room had I do not know unto this day. The reluctance to allow us to occupy it was obvious to us both. The surprise at the belief that we had passed a pleasant night there was not to be concealed. The striking similarity of our experiences seems to point to the existence of a real influence of some kind. The story has no sequel. We saw no sight, heard no sound, had no idea borne in upon the mind. Just that nameless horror overhung us, with the accompanying sensation of cold in the extremities nearest to the stove, and heat at what should have been the cooler end for both of us. The whole thing is isolated, like the solitary footprint seen by Crusoe, and I can no more explain my puzzle than the recluse could have explained his.

The story just related is neither of an illusion nor a dream, but it seems to suggest an atmosphere, in which either one or the other might well have been induced. A fact which it is important to keep in sight in a general consideration of the whole question is that men of the highest intellectual power have not merely been subject to the belief in supernormal appearances, but have permitted their actions to be guided by them. Napoleon's star was not to him a figment of the fancy, nor was his faith in its reality shaken when other people failed to perceive it, as in the case of General Rapp on his return from the siege of Dantzic in 1807. "It has never abandoned me," said the Emperor. "I behold it on all great occasions. It commands me to advance, and that to me is a sure sign of success." There are innumerable records of similar obsessions in the cases of men in whom no tinge of insanity was ever suspected, and the conclusion appears to be forced upon us that there is a substratum of reality on which to base inquiry.

### THE LOGIC OF DREAMS.

DELVING in that extraordinary jewel-heap which is to be found in the Literature of Dreams, you may discover a really wonderful collection of facts and fictions, of philosophy and quaint nonsense, of wise and unwise conjecture. One of the most remarkable discoveries the reader makes is that of the absurd way in which even the wisest of mankind in dealing with the unknown are willing to take a sweeping assertion for granted. As, for instance, Aristotle, and after him Pliny, remarked upon the more frequent

occurrence of dreams in the spring and in the autumn. It is, perhaps, to the acceptance of this wild and unprovable generalisation that we owe the "Symposiac Question" of Plutarch, in which the debate concerns itself with this query—"Why do we give least credit and least attention to dreams late in the autumn?" The problem reminds one of the inquiry—which is said to have been set on foot by that rather dismal rascal who is known to history as the Merry Monarch—how to account for the fact that the introduction of a live fish into a brimming bowl will not cause the water to overflow. The answer is, that no such fact ever was or ever could be observed in nature; but this did not prevent the formation of many ingenious theories, until some practical scientist put the matter to the test. Modern science is still far from affording a solution of all the psychic problems presented to it, but at least it has grown beyond the childishness of assuming a falsity to be true, and then setting itself to invent the reasons for it.

In the "Oneirocritica," the great dream-bible of Artemidorus, who was a native of Ephesus, and flourished in the second century, the art of interpreting dreams is reduced to a regular science; but the sceptical Boyle observes that there is not one dream explained in any particular manner by Artemidorus which will not admit of "a very different explication, that shall have as great show of reasonableness and probability as that furnished by him." There is a story of an athlete who intended to run in the Olympian games, and who dreamed that he was being driven in a chariot drawn by four horses. This called for explanation, and the athlete betook him to an interpreter, who told him that he would win, because his dream spoke of strength and swiftness. To make

assurance surer, he consulted another interpreter, who told him he would lose the race, because it was shown in his dream that four would reach the goal before him. But to return to Artemidorus. There is a gaudy spirit of haphazard about his interpretations of visions which makes them very entertaining reading. To dream of eating almonds is a token of trouble. If you dream of playing on the bagpipes you will be overthrown at law. To dream of caterpillars tells you that you have to dread secret enemies. The man who dreams of goats is unlucky, but "it is worst of all for a navigator." It is good for one who aspires to teach children to dream that he is a fool—"for children do willingly follow fools." If you dream that you are a knave you will attain riches. Leeks signify domestic jars ; lentils signify corruption. To be turned into brass shows some sudden quarrel and victory. "It is good for military men." And so on, through many closely-printed pages. But to my mind by far the most jocund of all authoritative dream-interpretations is set forth in the "Sifat-e-Sirozah," an oracle which is held in high repute amongst the Parsees of Western India. "Few dreams can be more fortunate than that in which a man sees his wife's tongue amputated at the root."

According to the last-cited authority, to dream that you eat your own brains is a sign that you will live at your own cost. How often does a man dream that he eats his own brains ? If you dream that you eat another man's brains you will be able to subsist at his expense. How did these things get to be known ? One experiences the bewilderment expressed by Mr. Vincent Crummles, when he wondered how things got into the papers. It is curious to notice how these loose superstitions stretch sometimes over whole

centuries of time, and extend from east to west. In the English Midlands, in my own childhood, to dream of a black horse was regarded as a prelude to great misfortune. Astrampsychus, an Eastern dream interpreter of the fourteenth century, attributes the same meaning to the sign. Alike in the English rustic code of fifty years ago and the Eastern code of six centuries back, to laugh or to weep in dreams signified their own opposites. The day of Khurdád, the angel who presides over water and vegetation, was suitable, in the mind of the Parsee, for shaving, for scraping nails, and for going to the bath. It was lucky to cut the nails on Saturday in the Black Country, and a sure forecast of misfortune to cut them on a Friday. All this fantastical rubbish has found a home in the human mind in one form or another amongst all orders of civilised and uncivilised peoples. Flatly contradictory meanings are often assigned to the omens of dreams, but there is here and there to be found a general principle. Crows and ravens are common signs of evil. White and scarlet are good colours to dream of.

But, apart from the reading of meaning into dreams, it is curious to notice how widely different are the conclusions arrived at by men who are anxious to reach an understanding of their relation to the mind. "Dreams," says Addison, "look like the amusements and relaxations of the soul when she is disengaged from her machine; her sports and pastimes when she has laid her charge asleep." Bishop Newton finds it an argument for the existence of the soul that while the avenues of the body are closed the mind is still endowed with sense and perception. He argues that there must necessarily be "two distinct and separate substances," where we find that when one sinks under

the burden and fatigue of the day, "the other shall be fresh and active as the flame." Dr. Thomas Cromwell repudiates this conclusion with disdain. Dogs are known to dream, and if we argue that the faculty of dreaming indicates the existence of a soul in man, we cannot deny the possession of a soul to the animal who shares the faculty. It is still interesting to read the arguments which good old Dr. Watts, the famous hymnist, brought against John Locke's contention that the soul does not exercise its power of thinking whilst its ordinary relations with the body are sundered in the act of profound sleep. Watts's fame as a theologian and a reasoner is now quite done with, though he had a great reputation in his day and his "*Logic*" was once in use as a text-book at Oxford. One sees the great little man beaming with a mild complacency as he disposes calmly of his giant adversary. "The objections of Mr. Locke against the constancy of thinking in the soul of man are easily answered; I shall set the chief of them in order here." The "*Essay on the Human Understanding*" has somehow survived, and the "*Philosophical Essays*" of Dr. Watts have somehow dropped into oblivion. The gist of the Doctor's contention is that perpetual cogitation is the very nature and essence of a spirit, and that when it ceases to think it ceases to be, which is perhaps equal to the idea that when a master lays down his fiddle he ceases to be a musician.

We encounter a whole school, according to which dreams have an entirely material origin. Andrew Baxter, who appears to trace the action of the mind in sleep to the condition of the dreamer's stomach, has rather a shrewd observation to the effect that it would be a somewhat slippery principle to allow that in sleep

the soul acts both the part of deceiver and deceived. Can we imagine, he asks, that the soul can at the same time lay a plot to frighten itself and be in real terror at its own designs? That the *mind* can do this we know full well, and it has long been accepted as proved that one lobe of the brain frequently acts in advance of the other; but a scientific investigation into the phenomena of the dual mind had not even found its beginning in Baxter's day. We find a second school affirming that all dreams are the result of the intrusion of a spirit influence from without. But this idea, if ever it could have been entertained by any serious student, is completely upset by the record of the experiments of M. Maury, who demonstrated the possibility of inducing dreams by the provocation of the external organs. A sleeper's lips and nose were tickled with a feather, and he dreamed that a pitch plaster was applied to his face. This looks like a reminiscence of Burke, Hare, Bishop, and Williams, with the stories of whose crimes the whole world was thrilled about 1829-30. The sleeper was made to smell *eau de Cologne*, and thought himself in the shop of Jean Farina in Cairo. His neck was slightly pinched, and he dreamed of a physician who had attended him in youth, and fancied that a blister was applied.

There is another form of dream which appears to rise from the sleeping mind itself—or as some not unreasoningly believe, from spirit suggestion. Macario, in his work on "Sleep and Dreams," speaks of this sort of experience as "intracranial" or sensorial. He gives an example of a woman who on three successive nights heard a voice saying to her "Kill thy daughter! Kill thy daughter!" and did actually murder her child. The same writer gives examples of the psy-

chical or intellectual dream where in sleep the sphere of the mind seems to extend and enlarge itself to a marvellous extent. Galen averred that many of his most striking inspirations occurred to him in sleep. The author of "Hermos the Pastor," one of the most interesting books of Christian antiquity, wrote to the dictation of a voice heard in sleep. All English readers are familiar with the dream verses of Coleridge :

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree.

Condorcet, the champion of human perfectibility, and Condillac, the author of the "Origins of Human Knowledge," alike claimed that much of their most brilliant work was done in their sleeping hours. The general experience of literary men is, however, that their dream inspirations are for the most part either elusive or absurd. Mr. Robert Buchanan once told me of a whole epic which presented itself to him in a dream. He read it with emotions of astonishment and delight, but on awaking he found that the only lines he could recall were void of meaning. I myself have had a similar experience, and I learn on inquiry amongst brain workers in many departments that it is not at all an uncommon characteristic of their dreams that they should imagine some great problem solved, or some work of art achieved, in a manner which turns out to be purely ridiculous when it appeals to the judgment of the waking mind.

Boswell tells an odd story of Dr. Johnson which is very interesting as affording an example of the working of the dual mind. The Doctor supposed himself to be engaged in a contest of wit with some other person, and in his dream he was greatly mortified at having to acknowledge that his opponent had the

better of him. Johnson makes a quaint reflection on this. "One may mark here the effect of sleep in weakening the power of reflection, for had not my judgment failed me I should have seen that the wit of this supposed antagonist, by whose superiority I felt myself depressed, was as much furnished by me as that which I thought I had been uttering in my own character." It would have been interesting could we have learned that the Doctor recalled the conversation, and that the wit on either side was real. In the *Dublin University Magazine* for August, 1836, a dream is recorded in which the subject imagined himself threatened by a Spahi in Stamboul, who cocked and levelled his carbine. It immediately occurred to the dreamer that he was sound asleep, and he was seized with a fit of laughter, in which he told the Spahi to go to the devil for a nonentity. There are many instances in which a dream frequently recurring is recognised by the dreamer for what it is, and is observed with the placid interest with which a familiar piece would be followed on the stage. My father used often to tell of such an experience. He had again and again and again a dream the incidents of which never varied. He was arrested on a charge of murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to death. He invariably awoke at the instant at which he was about to be hanged. At first he felt all the agonies of nightmare, but when he had passed through the experience twice or thrice he was able to look on with a complete understanding of the fact that he was asleep, and could predicate in his own mind the instant at which he would awake.

There are, as we have seen, a quite considerable number of varieties in dream. It remains to be seen what rational explanation can be given to each of their

principal forms. The sufferings of indigestion are undoubtedly answerable for many kinds of nightmare, the direction of the dreamer's thought being determined by trivial outside causes. Dreams of flight and levitation are probably due to the fact that the soles of the feet are relieved from all sense of pressure. Maury's experiments make it certain that dreams can be induced by a change of light or of illuminated colour, by the application of heat or cold, by the use of perfumes, or by slight physical contacts. All these orders of dream are simple and explicable enough. What Macario calls the intracranial dream will be explained by some as being caused by a disembodied soul, or by the exercise of an outside will ; but we must perforce be content to rest in some obscurity. The creative dreams of Galen, Hermos, Coleridge, Condorcet, Condillac, and innumerable others make it certain that bodily consciousness is not an essential to thought, and strengthen the suggestion that thought and consciousness may even be opposed to each other. No vigorous thinker realises *himself* at the moment of cogitation, and the body is always essentially asleep when the mind is most deeply engaged. Johnson's dream may be merely one of the common trivialities or a striking instance of dual action in the brain, resembling that displayed in the two cases which follow its narration in the preceding paragraph. The most reasonable explanation of dreams of revelation is that they are telepathic. Take the case of William Corder and his victim's mother. The murderer's haunting dread of the woman's suspicion and his obsessed vision of the spot where the body lay buried combine to give us all we need to know, if once we have accepted the belief in the involuntary communication of mind with mind. I see no explanation whatever

of dreams which relate to real future occurrences. It is beyond question that they have happened, but they rest as yet among the mysteries.

### IN DREAMLAND.

IN a number of the *Nineteenth Century* published in 1903 there was an article which dealt with the old puzzle of anticipatory dreams. It gave two or three examples, which were perhaps none the less interesting because their prophecy of coming events appeared to have been either partial and incomplete in itself, or quite unproductive in the way of warning. The writer was Lady Mary Montgomerie Currie, the late brilliant and accomplished wife of a British Ambassador at Rome, and was known to a wide public by her pen-name of "Violet Fane." That she dropped the thin veil of pseudonym in the *Nineteenth Century* may be taken as evidence of a desire to accept a direct personal responsibility for her narrative. There is nothing in that narrative which is essentially new, but it offers an added testimony to a strange and long-accepted fact, in the attempt to account for which the human mind has hitherto been completely baffled. For example, Lady Currie relates a dream of her own in which she encountered a very forbidding person in very creepy circumstances. In her dream she was ushered into a room, the furniture of which she noted very clearly. About a month later she paid a visit of charity to a mean house in a poor quarter of the town, and there met and recognised the grotesque creature of her dream. The aspect and the very odours of the house she had visited in vision were identical with those of the place itself. Both in the dream and in

the actual experience one trivial incident happened. Looking out of window she saw a young Lifeguardsman go by with a gaily-dressed girl on either arm. The principal incident of the dream—the presence of two undertaker's men with a coffin—was not in any respect accounted for by the circumstances of the real visit, and yet there was something in it which might have been construed into a warning. The curious in such matters must be referred to the narrative itself.

Lady Currie told at first hand a story gathered from the late Laurence Oliphant. He dreamed that he met a person in the attire of a navvy whose face seemed to make a singular appeal to him. Later in his dream he became aware that the man had a wound in his forehead, from which blood was dripping. He met and recognised this man in America. He passed him by, and, returning by the same route in the evening, found that the man had been wounded in the forehead by a pick wielded by a comrade in a quarrel, and that he was dying. My readers will recall a case cited on the authority of the Duke of Argyll, in which the wife of a distinguished dignitary of the English Church refused to enter a certain house because in a dream she had seen a murder committed there. She was able to describe the interior of the building, which she had certainly never seen with waking eyes, and it turned out on inquiry that a strangely suspicious death had really occurred there. The two instances cited do not quite run on all fours, because Mr. Oliphant's dream, like Lady Currie's, was premonitory or prophetic, whilst that of the lady just instanced is related as if it were about contemporary with the crime to which it pointed. But I quote them together because all three seem to offer, on

such terms as we are ready to accept in ordinary human testimony, evidence of a faculty of self-projection in dreams which is very far removed from our ordinary conception of the normal state. It is, of course, to be noted that these three instances, which are selected out of many thousands purely because of their modernity, are vouched for by persons of whose veracity concerning the ordinary affairs of life we should have no doubt whatever. They come to us with whatever voucher the social respectability and general reputation for trustworthiness of those who relate them can offer, and it is not easy to see how we can refuse to accept them in good faith. But it is certain that they open strange prospects to our view.

The transcendentalist can explain them all quite easily, but then it is not easy to swallow the transcendental theory. The idea that time, as we understand it, is a mere human abstraction, and that past, present, and future are no more than terms invented for human convenience, that we live in a universal "Now" in which all such distinctions are lost, is one not readily grasped by the ordinary intelligence. The concurrent part of the theory, which is that the act of sleep occasionally releases the animate part of man from its fleshly raiment and permits it to roam at large is perhaps easier of acceptance; but to arrive at an actual belief in the truth of premonitory dreams would seem either to imply an acceptance of the transcendental theory of time *holus bolus*, or a belief in the existence of intelligences which have prescience of coming events and a power—which so far seems very broken and confused—of conveying some impression to ourselves. A thing to be especially noted is that in the majority of recorded instances

the dream is practically unserviceable. In the case cited by the Duke of Argyll the dream records a crime, but does not prevent it, or lead to the detection of the criminal. In Lady Currie's case the vision brings into view a grotesque personality, afterwards seen with waking eyes, a room furnished in a certain fashion, the commonplace passing of a soldier with a girl on either arm, and nothing of consequence to the dreamer's career. In the case of Mr. Oliphant nothing comes of the fact but the fact itself. Granting the truth of the whole story, a thing is seen before it happens, but it serves no purpose to have seen it. Lady Currie seems to incline to the idea that something not ourselves is striving—so far, rather vainly,—to enter into communication with us. To employ her own simile, it is as if one to whom the front entrance of the mind is denied should strive to attract attention from without by throwing gravel at the windows, conveying little more to the mind than the fact that someone *is* without.

Instances of belief in premonitory dreams are beyond number. From Nebuchadnezzar's appeal to Daniel to Pharaoh's appeal to Joseph is but a step in sacred history, and secular stories of a like kind are endless.. But the materialists as well as the visionaries have had their say in this matter, and the inquiries of Alfred Maury in particular were directed towards a discovery of the method of operation of the sensory nerves in respect to the creation of dream-conditions. I think it was Maury who observed that a world-wide traveller dreamed of the desert of Sahara when hot bricks were placed at his feet, and of the Arctic regions when an icebag was substituted. It was he who found he could induce a dream of travelling by diligence by uncovering

the sleeper's knees, and that the application of a feather to the lips brought about a dream in which a choking hand appeared to be placed upon them. The "flying" dreams which most of us have experienced at one time or another would appear to be created by the fact that the feet are relieved of all sense of pressure in the recumbent attitude of sleep. The general dream characteristic is one of extreme exaggeration ; as when a sensation of warmth or cold or repose suggests the illimitable desert or the thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice, or the free and voluntary cleavage of the air. But another characteristic reveals a singular faculty of subliminal observation, as where, in a dream, a person well known to us will display little singularities of featural movement, of accent and of gesture, which are all a part of his personality, but have never been consciously observed in waking hours.

It is probable that the bravest of us have known that horrible paralysis of terror which accompanies a certain kind of dream. As an instance of that exaggerative, unconscious faculty of the mind of which I have spoken, I may set down an experience of my own. At the time of the murders committed by the infamous "Jack the Ripper," many circumstances had conspired to unhinge me, and I found myself nervously run-down and in need of rest. It occurred to me to go to Folkestone for a few days, and, taking the earliest train on Sunday morning, I laid in a stock of newspapers, among them the *Observer*, which held a long and particularised account of a double murder committed the night before. I could not get the ghastly details from my mind. The friends I had expected to meet at my journey's end had wired excuses. The weather was rainy and

cold. I spent my day indoors with that double crime in mind, and I went to bed early, still oppressed by it. I fell into a troubled sleep in a room not entirely darkened and the obsession of the day pursued me into a dream. I was in the midst of a wide stretch of fields which had been familiar to me in childhood, and I was near a familiar stile. I became aware of the murmur of a distant crowd, which grew more and more terrible and threatening. I saw the crowd itself with one flying figure in front of it. The fugitive was running for his life, and I felt a momentary pity for him. But then in a flash I knew him. It was "Jack the Ripper." He held a blood-dripping knife between his teeth and another in his hand, and he climbed the stile before me whilst the pursuing crowd still cried for vengeance on him far in the rear.

And now, said I to myself in my dream, we have got this wretch at last, and I was certain of my own power to hold him. Then, as the ferocious figure came on, knife in teeth and knife in hand, the paralysis of the dream-horror fell upon me, and I could move neither hand nor foot. I awoke in an extremity of fear, and even when awake I saw the wicked eyes of the beast lamping at me, and heard the threatening murmur of the far-off crowd. I do not know how long it took me to recognise the fact, but a big black cat was lying on the bed and purring noisily in excess of comfort. I am natively disposed to be kind to animals, but I punched that creature from its place, and for a full twenty minutes, as I guess, I failed to find courage to rise and open a door of escape for him. Now here was a notable example of that exaggerated force which is assumed by exterior causes in dreams. The harmless purr of the cat translated

itself into the threatening distant roar of angry hundreds of excited people, and it was that without doubt which was the immediately provocative cause of the whole dream.

It is a common saying that dreams, if they afford a revelation of no other kind, at least reveal us to ourselves, and that we commonly behave in them as we should do under similar conditions in our waking hours. That this is quite untrue is proved by the fact that men who have faced an immediate prospect of dissolution in their waking hours with intrepid coolness are subject to the abject terrors of nightmare, and that even the bravest are sometimes cowards in their dreams. But the abiding puzzle is—and will be in all probability for centuries to come—how the soul detaches itself from the sleeping body in dreams, and how it contrives to realise, even in the most inchoate and broken fashion, places and people as yet unknown, and circumstances which have not yet occurred. The rule in these matters is that the first-hand evidence of reputable people deserves to be accepted, and the evidence is, of course, all the stronger when, as in the case under discussion, it has been offered in all ages and in all countries. There is one of two conclusions to be arrived at. There is no possibility of self-deception, and either the narrators of these wonders have in all ages and in all countries been arrant liars—which there is no earthly reason to suppose—or we live under conditions the awe and mystery of which we have not yet fairly begun to understand.

## SIR OLIVER LODGE AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

### TELEPATHY.

I turn for a few moments to the consideration of a widely different subject, which I have often previously discussed. Sir Oliver Lodge, in his third presidential address to the Psychical Research Society, offered a pronouncement which I think has never before been definitely set forth by any person of equal authority and eminence. He spoke of the fact of telepathy as now being scientifically proved and accepted. "Already," he is reported as saying, "the discovery of telepathy constitutes the first fruits of this society's work, and it has laid open the way to the discovery of much more." It is probable that there are thousands of people alive who did not stand in need of any official confirmation of their own beliefs. I have more than once confessed myself to be one of them, and yet it is useful and agreeable to be assured, as the result of a most prolonged and conscientiously rigid inquiry, that one has not been walking all these years in a vain shadow, and deluding oneself on mere grounds of emotion and coincidence. It marks an epoch in the investigation of the spiritual forces of the human race to find it accepted as a scientific axiom that men can and do hold communion with each other irrespective of distance, and without the aid of speech, writing, or mechanically transmitted signs. The hard-and-fast materialists will probably first of all strive to ignore the fact itself,

and having been driven to its acceptance, will begin to account for it by some conception of the marvellous force and delicacy of the human nervous system ; and we may have the nerve-vibration theory of De Fleury made elastic enough, and powerful enough, to account for the transmission of a mental form or impulse from one man in London to another in Pekin.

Others will regard it differently, as being a first step in the most wonderful march on which humanity has ever entered. There has never been an age in the history of mankind since civilisation and thought began when there have not been some at least who were familiar with the vision of King Arthur, to whom

—this earth he walks on seems not earth,  
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,  
This air that smites his forehead is not air,  
But vision —yea, his very hand and foot—  
In moments when he feels he cannot die,  
And knows himself no vision to himself,  
Nor the high God a vision.

To such as these it may seem conceivable that science has at last set forth on a journey towards the demonstration of the spiritual side of man—towards the discovery of the human soul. The materialist will answer and declare that, search as we may amongst the astounding intricacies of the human organism, we shall not reach a point at which we can demonstrate mind as apart from matter. The materialist had things all his own way only a little time ago, but so far he has demonstrated only that all men have to exercise the virtues of patience and humility, and that he himself is in especial need of them.

## INTUITIONS AND AFFINITIES.

IT seems like a very bald truism to say that all things move in the direction along which they are most attracted and least repelled. But, taking this same truism as the groundwork of an inquiry into the laws which may be supposed to govern certain psychic manifestations, I find some very curious problems presented to my mind. These manifestations have occurred to all sorts and conditions of people, but in nothing like due proportion to what one would be inclined to regard as the receptive faculty of the observers. I think we may fairly look with some incredulity upon the impressions received by the half-dazed creatures of the solitudes, who have, until the days when evidence began to be scientifically examined, always made up the mass of professed ghost-seers. There was undoubtedly a belief existing for many centuries that self-maceration and the consequent reduction of the merely physical faculties and appetites was the golden bridge over which one who desired an intimate correspondence with beings on another plane of life might travel. But then it has always been notorious that a debilitated condition of the body tends to megrims and to perturbations of the mind, and the evidence one would now most willingly receive is that afforded by the person who is in the fullest possession of the *mens sana in corpore sano*. On these grounds it might at the first blush be supposed that your healthy poet, artist, or musician, would be the person from whom authentic intelligence would be most likely to be derived.

The evidence of men of high intelligence and imagination is not wanting, but in comparison with that of the eternal crowd of nobodies it is meagre and indefinite. It does certainly appear that the Dæmon of Socrates was regarded by the philosopher himself as a separate entity—a something distinct from himself and unsusceptible of his control. But what shall we say as to the belief of Shakespeare? He utilises the weird sisters of Macbeth, the delicate Ariel of *The Tempest*, and the Puck, Titania, and Oberon of fairyland apparently on a purely dramatic background and for a purely poetic purpose. The ghost of Brutus is not more real than the apparition in the tent of Richard on the night before Bosworth, and then the keynote of the whole scene is struck in the cry, "I do but dream." In *Hamlet* the Prince is not only himself clair-audient and clair-voyant, but his friends are so also, and the objective nature of the Ghost is made evident by the simultaneous appearance of the manifesting spirit to all three. And yet it is *after* this proof of authenticity that Hamlet is found to speak of that undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller e'er returns. If ever man was presumed to have had convincing evidence, it is Hamlet, and we find him expressing the blankest denial of it all. It is here as it is elsewhere with Shakespeare. He leaves you in doubt of everything but the supremacy of his own genius. You may argue either way as to his personal belief. He lived in what is called a superstitious age, when faith in the validity of the ghost was almost universal. He may either have endorsed that belief or have utilised it merely. There is no conclusive word or line on which to hang a definite opinion.

In our higher and more spiritual poetry there is

little serious use made of the apparitional theory, a fact which goes to show that the ghost-seers are not the more spiritual sort of men, or in the lofty sense, the more imaginative. Wordsworth's glorious ode on the intimations of immortality is conceived in a purely spiritual region. Tennyson's yearnings for the renewed companionship of his dead friend are strictly confined to a desire for spirit communion. He contemplates no substanced form. When "through a window in the soul" looks the "fair face and makes it still," it is no physically visualised and tangible face, but a sudden renewal of memory helping him to evade the "hollow masks of night" which have haunted the fancy until now, and have obscured the picture he has striven to paint upon the dark. Through all the intense longing which is breathed throughout "*In Memoriam*," there is never a hint of a desire for the vision of a corporeal form. The wish is to meet "spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost," and at last, if we may trust the record, it appears to have been granted.

The statement is to be accepted with certain evident reserves, but on the whole it will be found that those appearances, for which the soundest evidence has been given, and are in themselves most credible, have been those of persons who have not been remarkable in their own lives. It will further appear that they occur for the most part to unremarkable people. In a word, the record of the ghost-seers is for the most part a record of the visits of the commonplace to the commonplace, and for commonplace purposes. Ghosts indicate buried treasure, for all the world as if they were modern newspaper proprietors, and they expose a murder or a theft as if they were of the tribe of Messrs. Blathers and Duff, or they make

purposeless visits to people who learn nothing from their visitations except the fact that they have been visited.

There is, I venture to believe, not one authorised story within a thousand years of human history of the ghost of any person who had proved himself above the average human height in sympathy, knowledge, or insight who has left any important message to the world. But this by no means does away with the belief in the ghost. There is not the faintest reason to suppose that the average Brown, Jones, or Robinson who has been projected into another form of life knows more of his ultimate career than the average Brown, Jones, or Robinson who has not yet been so projected. Whatever we do really know teaches us to believe that the processes Under the Law are extremely slow and searching. If dead Jones knows that he is still conscious, and has only undergone a change of form, the probabilities are a million to one that this is the sole addition to his certainties. Never a word has reached the world from the spirit space outside it which has been beyond the philosophy of the living man. If we are immortal at all—as I do most sincerely believe we are—one can never be more immortal than at this present moment.

Determined spiritists persist in their belief that some of their guides still speak in broken English, and such other uncouth dialects as distinguished them in human life. Let him be never so real, and at the same time never so ghostly, I do not ask that any plantation nigger shall jabber me into a confirmation of a belief I hold already. So far as we have any evidence to guide us, the disembodied spirit is in no way the superior of the embodied soul. Where he pretends to appear under the ægis of a great and

venerated name he has proved one of two things—either that he himself is a fraud or that the medium he has chosen is incapable of expressing him at more than a commonplace moment. And this brings me rapidly to my point, which is simply that the spiritual affiliations to which we have been accustomed in this life are likeliest to be those—or to resemble those—with which we shall be most intimately associated in the future. I am not disputing the apparitional theory, which, indeed, seems to me to be supported by witnesses so honest and so transparently simple in their purpose that to deny weight to their evidence is to inflict a moral wrong. My main contention is that the average apparition is not an illuminated creature, and that the mere fact of being dead does not appear, so far, to confer any peculiar intellectual brilliance on the personality which has passed over to “the other side.”

We have on the present side our own natural intuitions and affinities. It is very often difficult to imagine how they rise, and why one man should be antipathetic to us on a first encounter and another should be instantly welcomed to our friendship. But we know that it is so, and it is not a wholly impossible thing (to present the idea in its weakest form) that in a case in which an apparition has presented itself to a number of people and has failed to manifest itself at the same time and place to others these natural forces of attraction and repulsion have been answerable for the result. It appears most probable that like would still appeal to like; and, further, that grief would still appear by preference to the sympathetic; that an apparition having the power to inspire terror might be tempted either to confront a brave man in the search of triumph or a timid one

in the certainty of gratifying its instincts ; that a feeble and wandering entity, having discovered an occasional power to manifest, might be able only to achieve success in the case of those with whom his feebleness was *en rapport*.

Accept the ghostly theory with perfect seriousness—grant all its most convinced believers claim—and it remains to be acknowledged that the power and the desire to return do not exist together in one amongst millions of the dead. They exist, if they exist at all, mainly amongst the most mediocre of intelligences. We were at one time invited to believe that the spirits of Burns and Shakespeare were to be heard at a fee of one guinea rapping out double knocks like a pair of demented postmen, but we received from neither any intimation which was above the intellectual apprehension of a child of ten. We may pretty safely dismiss cases of this kind as so many ignorant and clumsy dabblings in pure fraud. We may assume that the great departed who ruled among us by the right divine of genius have no desire to return to the lower plane of life. Not to speak it profanely—they have other fish to fry. But it is not beyond imagination to suppose that the kinglier dead still condescend to some spiritual communion with their true successors ; that the soul of Chaucer might have spoken with the soul of Keats ; that Lamb's gentle fancies may sometimes have been whispered in the mental ear of Wendell Holmes ; that one martyr may have spoken peace to the heart of another in his pain ; or that even we humbler folk who move in the common ways and amongst the common things of life are sustained and guided by the intuitions afforded to us by those who are truly affiliated to us and have gone before.

But the common materialised ghost is mainly a

futile thing. If it be foolish to believe that I do sometimes hold communion with some of those who are here no more, but who in life were like-minded and like-hearted with myself—if it be foolish to believe that some murmur from the great beyond is sometimes meant to wake an answering chord in me—why, then, I am content to rest in folly. But as for the embodied ghost, I cannot find that he brings me anything worth my learning, or any assurance of which I am not convinced beforehand.

### NATURAL LAW.

THE Mystics have always held that what we call matter is symbolical of something not itself, and many of them have believed that, except in this sense, it is wholly illusory. Huxley, who was as little of a Mystic as any man who ever lived, derided the idea of the man who attempted to prove the actual existence of matter by stamping on the ground. When we see the glowing “bloom” dragged by hydraulic pincers from the furnace, and feel the ground shake beneath our feet at the thud of the falling Nasmyth hammer, or when we see a thinking and sentient creature turned into crude earth by the sudden impact of a rifle bullet, it is more than easy to think that the existence of matter is demonstrated, and yet it is not so. The only thing proved by these demonstrations is that they appeal to our senses in a given manner. When we compare notes about them we seem to find that we all entertain precisely the same opinions with regard to them, but then this curious truth remains—that the individual man cannot prove to himself even the bare fact of his own corporeal

existence. I may be merely dreaming this present pen, ink and paper and these present thoughts, and may conceivably awake to a condition of things in which what I now regard as matter has no weight or form ; that a universe full of problems and passions has melted into mere nothingness ; that the whole human race, with its histories, sciences, institutions, encyclopædias, is a myth and a fancy, a mere creation of a mind momentarily distempered and unguided. "I am alive," says Charles Lamb in his exultant and inspiring "New Year's Eve." "I think. I walk about." But I cannot *know* that the delightful Elia is other than the figment of a dream when I find Carlyle saying in "Sartor Resartus": "What thou seest is not there on its own account ; strictly speaking, is not there at all. Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some idea and body it forth." The Prince in Tennyson's poem says :

On a sudden in the midst of men and day  
And whilst I walked and talked as heretofore  
I seemed to walk amidst a world of ghosts  
And feel myself the shadow of a dream.

Naturally, perhaps, the simple man of action turns away from these speculations with some impatience and disdain. "What does it all matter?" he asks. "Here is something in the nature of a simulacrum which we are somehow agreed to call a tree. I cut it down, and split it into planks and beams, or, if you like, I dream that I cut it down and split it into planks and beams. Here is a non-existent stuff which I call clay, and here an imaginary thing I call a mould, and by lighting a phantom match and kindling a non-existent fire I can appear to produce what you and I are agreed, for the sake of a dream-convenience, to call a brick. With my planks and

beams and bricks I will build a house, which you may call a phantasm if you like, but will serve me as a shelter from what I imagine to be hail, rain, snow, easterly winds, and excessive sunshine." And the practical man is quite right. To quote Byron, "When Bishop Berkeley said there was no matter, And proved it 'twas no matter what he said." The unvarying permanence of the properties we attribute to the varying forms and forces of Nature is the one thing with which we are most immediately called to concern ourselves, and when Swedenborg and our own Carlyle and the German Transcendentalists have done their best and their worst with us, we are pretty solidly convinced that what we call fire will inflict what we call a burn, that sudden impact with what we call a solid body will inflict what we call a contusion or a wound, and that what we call water will induce what we call drowning if we cannot swim.

For practical purposes things are what they seem, "what the heart of the young man said to the Psalmist" and all the Transcendentalists together notwithstanding. Whether they truly are, or only appear to be, is one to us so long as our conceptions concerning them and our experiences in dealing with them do not vary; but where the transcendental philosophy begins to be of service to us is at that point at which it begins to indicate through material things the character and purposes of a Creator. I have recently dealt with the insane assumption that Science had conducted God to her frontiers. Adhering to every line I wrote, let me try to see how in its own degree Science may yet appear as a revelation. Tyndall, in a lecture delivered many years ago, claimed for Science that it would wrest from theology "the entire domain of cosmological theory." It will

not do that ; but it may well be the legitimate hand-maiden of theologic thought. The human mind is for ever prowling and peering in search of the attributes of that great First Cause, the existence of which has been almost inevitably taken for granted by savage and civilised man alike. The thing of uttermost importance to us, if we could find it, would be to learn the immediate and final destinies which attend upon us and await us. Revealed religions beyond counting have professed to solve the question, and one after another they have dropped into the vast abyss of time. Can Nature and our growing knowledge of her afford us any help ?

The first thought which occurs to us as we survey sentient Nature is that it is a most disastrous welter of suffering. It is everywhere " red in tooth and claw with rapine." Everything is preying upon something else. The shark or the alligator will crunch a man as we crunch an apple, and man gets his breakfast bacon by murder, and the feathered musician of the sky sings a prelude to the death of an earthworm in his heavenward hymn. It is all very ugly, all very full of pain and terror—and it is very evident at the first glance that pain and terror are a part of the great scheme, whatever it may finally turn out to be. But look further—only a little further—and you will discern that through an infinite cruelty there is an unmistakable trend towards its own opposite, very slow but very sure. The predatory instinct is strong and lasting, but it shows no sign of being all-powerful and everlasting. It yields slowly yet perceptibly. With every waste which is transformed into a wheat-field the lower forms of intelligence are supplanted by the higher. Drain a swamp and you extinguish malarial bacteria and all sorts of forms of malefic

life, from the foul snake to the buzzing mosquito. Man, "the roof and crown of kings," striving, thinking, learning, and contriving, has taken the place of beings noxious and without use.

A little deeper still, and you discover that the whole universe is ruled by inexorable laws which never vary in any particular by the shadow of a hair's breadth, and if you are willing that a survey of visible nature shall help you to a conception of the attributes of the Maker of it, and the beginning of an insight into His designs, it will be seen that the task is not entirely without hope. If you postulate a creative force out of what the visible, learnable part of the universe can teach you, you can hardly fail to conceive of an intelligence which is finally beneficent and momentarily inexorable. The law is absolutely without pity, but, being obeyed, it never fails to yield a benevolent award. It is only by the survey of great tracts of time that we arrive at these central truths of natural religion. As, for instance, you look at the scaled winged beasts, which exist now in our museums only, or in fossiliferous beds of shale and lime-stone, and you think of Plato and Tennyson. Law has been obeyed and enforced all along the line—obeyed and enforced in multitudinous forms, and there is the product of it. The final result is not yet reached or guessed at, but I do not see how any thinking creature is to evade the principle of progress. I do not see either how any thinking creature is going to evade the idea that a relentless necessity is meant to propel us upwards. Nature, in the words of Hamlet, must be cruel only to be kind.

That we are still chock-full of every kind of imaginable error and wrongdoing; that we do daily sin against the laws we know, and ignorantly knock our

heads against laws as yet unrecognised, does not affect the truth of this eternal gospel of growth and hope of growth. Where Science enters on the realm of belief at all it is to confirm our best aspirations—not to establish or confute, because these are outside her powers—but to offer a logical support to the belief in a wise and benevolent, conscious and intelligent governance which carries one unceasing purpose through the ages.

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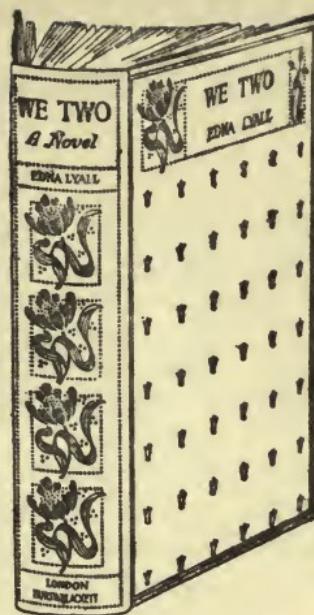
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